

# The Modern Language Journal

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## Contents

STUDY HINTS FOR LANGUAGE STUDENTS, <i>William G. Moulton</i> .....	259
INVESTIGACIONES DE LITERATURA ESPAÑOLA POR EMPRENDER, <i>Homero Seris</i> .....	265
EUGÉNIO DE CASTRO AND THE REACTION TO SYMBOLISM IN PORTUGAL, <i>John M. Fein</i> .....	268
THE NEED OF A NEW APPROACH TO MODERN LANGUAGE STUDY, <i>Emilio Goggio</i> .....	272
A COURSE IN MEXICAN CIVILIZATION, <i>A. Wallace Woolsey</i> .....	274
WE PUT OUR CHILDREN IN A FRENCH SCHOOL, <i>L. Clark Keating</i> .....	276
COMMUNITY READING, <i>Ferdina J. Capparelli de Tort</i> .....	279
A MODERN LANGUAGE WEEK, <i>Cornelia Burge, Leona Glenn, and Ethel La Vella</i> .....	282
THE PROBLEM OF ATTRACTING STUDENTS TO LANGUAGE STUDY, <i>Alfred L. Lupien</i> .....	284
THE EDITOR'S CORNER.....	287
AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS.....	297
NOTES AND NEWS.....	300
MEETINGS.....	303
BOOK REVIEWS.....	306

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NOTE—Printed order of articles does not imply relative merit. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the editorial staff. The interest and the cooperation of all *Journal* contributors are appreciated.

All contributions should be typed and double-spaced, with the exception of long footnotes. Standard-sized white paper should be used, and only an original copy is acceptable. Unacceptable contributions accompanied by unattached postage will be returned. Prompt acknowledgment of receipt is best assured by the inclosure of a self-addressed post card.

## Study Hints for Language Students

LANGUAGE teachers have spent much time and effort, particularly in recent years, on devising new and more efficient methods of imparting linguistic skills to the student. For those lucky few who can spend four to six hours a day with their students, this is perhaps enough; the student then does nearly all of his work directly under the teacher's supervision. But for the rest of us, this is only part of the story—usually, in fact, just about one-third of the story. For if we accept the traditional rule-of-thumb that a college student should spend two hours of outside study for each hour of classroom work, this means that the student is on his own for two-thirds of the time, and our fancy new method (or tried and true old one) can be only one-third effective. Probably no aspect of language teaching has been so neglected as the study methods which students use during these unsupervised two-thirds of their language time.

The following suggestions on how to study were devised to fill this large gap in language teaching methodology. Though written to fit the particular teaching situation in German at Cornell, they are probably applicable to elementary instruction in any language at most schools and colleges. The first set of suggestions deals with the learning of basic speech patterns in the foreign language; the second set takes up the particular problems that arise when the student begins to read. In writing this latter section I have benefited greatly from F. R. Whitesell's excellent article, "Learning to Read a Foreign Language," in *Monatshefte* 44.100-7 (1952). Professor Whitesell's sound remarks caused me to revise two sections of my original version; in particular, I have borrowed from him the highly useful concept of "nuisance words."

Only one part of the suggestions needs any special explanation: the reference to "lab hours" and "drill hours" at the end of the section on reading. Elementary language courses at Cornell carry double credit (six hours, rather than the usual three). Twice a week the students

meet in large groups (up to fifty) for grammatical and textual analysis; the real backbone of the courses, however, is the daily drill and lab hour. Three times a week the students meet in groups of 10 with a native speaker of German for practice in speaking; these are the "drill hours." On the alternate three days they meet in groups of 20 with an American who can give them, even better than the native, the pattern drill and reading practice that are so necessary to the learning process. Playback machines are used in these classes, and they are therefore referred to as "lab hours."

Language learners, like language teachers, suffer from many frustrations. Perhaps the most tragic frustration is that of the really conscientious student who works hard but, because of poor study habits, learns little. Potentially one of our best customers, he loses interest, feels unjustly treated, develops a persecution complex, and decides that he is "not good at languages." "In any case," to quote Professor Whitesell, "he will abandon the study of foreign language at the earliest possible opportunity. The loss to the teacher in the way of 'business' is nothing compared to the loss suffered by the student and the community that he will later influence." It is to students such as this that the following lines are addressed. They deserve all the help we can give them.

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### SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO STUDY YOUR GERMAN

The following suggestions are made to increase your efficiency in learning German. There is no one set of suggestions which will fit all students perfectly, and experience will show just which techniques are most useful in your own particular case. However, our own experience has been that most students approach the study of a foreign language from precisely the wrong point of view. Hence at least some of the following remarks should be of considerable help to you.

*You can't learn a language by "thinking" about it.* Nearly all the non-language work which a college student does involves (or should involve) a large amount of thinking. Of course, you are asked to read a certain amount of material and to learn a certain number of facts; but this is only the beginning. The most important thing for you to do is to go home, sit down, and *think* about these facts: organize them, analyze them, and interpret them. Most students are so accustomed to this "thinking" approach that they try to learn a new language in the same way; the results are always disastrous.

*A language is a set of habits.* All of us speak our native language with complete fluency. Since we learned this one language so extremely well, it is worth while considering just how we did it. It is obvious from the very start that we didn't do it by "thinking." We had almost completely mastered the sounds and structure of the language by the time we were five or six years old, and at that time we couldn't "think" anywhere near as well as we can now that we are adults with an expensive education behind us. Instead of "thinking," we just listened to other people and copied what they said. By doing this over and over again, we eventually built up the complicated sets of habits which now let us talk our native language with complete ease. The "thinking" which we now do when we talk is concerned almost entirely with *what* we are going to say (the content), rather than with *how* we are going to say it (the language). We don't "think" about saying *he works* (with an ending -s) but *they work* (with no ending); nor do we "think" about pronouncing the word *the* as "thee" before words beginning with a vowel ("the apple, the orange"), but as "thuh" before words beginning with a consonant ("the peach, the banana"). Complicated things like this have become completely matters of habit. Most of us don't even know we do them until somebody points them out to us.

*You've got to listen and imitate.* As adults trying to learn a foreign language, we face much the same job that we did as children learning our native language. We can't use quite the same methods, but the general approach will still be the same: we've got to listen to someone who knows how to speak the language, and

we've got to imitate him as exactly as we can. In one way we're worse off than children: they start with a clean slate, whereas we're going to find that our native language habits get in the way all the time. But in another way we have a distinct advantage: since we already know one language, we can be told how the new language is put together, how it works, and how it differs from our native language. These directions ("grammar") can speed up the learning process considerably. Their only use, however, is to help us imitate more successfully; they are not an aim in themselves.

*You've got to memorize.* If a language is a set of habits, the only way to learn the language is to learn these habits. And you don't learn habits by "thinking"; you learn them by practice, practice, practice. In all your other courses you are asked to go home and organize, analyze, and interpret factual data; in your language course you will have to go home and practice the material you've heard in class over and over again until it becomes second nature. It's as simple—and as hard—as that.

*Study out loud.* One way to memorize the new material would be to read it over silently, again and again. That would be pretty ridiculous, of course, since you would then be learning not the language itself, but only the way it is symbolized on paper. In addition, it would be enormously inefficient. In reading silently, you would be using only your visual memory. If you study out loud, on the other hand, you first double your efficiency by adding auditory memory; then, by adding motor memory, you at least quadruple it, because motor memory is the most efficient of all. (Motor memory, you will recall, is the memory of what you do with your muscles. Proof of its efficiency is the fact that nobody ever forgets how to ride a bicycle, even though he may have had a terrible time learning it in the first place.) So do all your studying out loud. Of course, your roommate is going to think you're crazy when he walks in and finds you mumbling German to yourself. But pay no attention to him; he doesn't know any better.

*Divide the material into small units.* As children, we were all good at memorizing; as adults, we have had most of this memorizing ability educated out of us. Hence a few comments on the technique of memorizing may be helpful.



First of all, don't try to memorize a large body of material (like a whole set of basic sentences) at once. Break it up into small units (a page or two of basic sentences), memorize each of these units separately, and then string them all together.

*Divide your study time into small units.* If you spend two uninterrupted hours trying to memorize a set of basic sentences, you will do a poor job of memorizing and will probably go stark, raving mad in the process. Use a saner study technique. Start off with twenty minutes to half an hour at the most; then turn to some other work; then come back for another twenty minutes; and so on. Two hours divided into small bits like this will produce far better results than 120 straight minutes of agonizing study.

*Go from the easy to the hard.* Start off by reading the German aloud right out of the book; generally you will have little trouble remembering how the new words sounded or what they meant. As soon as you have read a sentence in this way, look away from the book and say it again. Only after you have practiced a section of material like this several times should you go on to the really hard part: looking at the English and then trying to say the German without peeking. If you have trouble saying a whole sentence in this way, try breaking it into smaller pieces, say each of them individually, and then string the pieces together.

*Make full use of class hours.* Language teachers classify students into the dumb and the smart not on the basis of how well they learn a language, but by the way they make use of class hours. The dumb ones sit back and dream until they happen to be called on; even if they know the answer, they're still dumb, because they've wasted valuable time. The smart ones pack fifty minutes of practice into each class hour. When somebody else is reciting, they are mentally reciting right along with him, and hence have new material half memorized even before they go home to study it. Of course, if you want to waste the class time you're paying for, that's quite all right with your teacher. But it's still pretty dumb. (P.S. Don't let this get around, but we've known students who got through the course solely on the basis of what they learned during class hours, without doing a lick of outside work.

We don't recommend this; and we don't consider such people very smart; but at least they weren't so dumb as to waste class time.)

*Don't fall behind.* Even though steady, day by day work is the best way to learn any subject, it is true that in many courses you can get yourself out of a jam by some high pressure, last minute cramming. Not so with a language. Cramming for a language exam would be about as sensible as cramming for a swimming test; you just can't learn habits that way. Furthermore, language learning is a highly cumulative process. It is like making a tower out of blocks: you keep building on top of what you did the day before. If you don't keep at the job steadily, pretty soon you're trying to put new blocks on top of empty space. So don't fall behind. Once in a while, of course, you won't have time to prepare an assignment. It happens—occasionally—in the best of families. But when it does happen, for heaven's sake don't be so bashful as to stay away from class. If you do, making up the work will be twice as hard. Come to class, tell the teacher you're unprepared, and learn as much as you possibly can from the classroom work.

*Do you ever need to "think"?* Yes; but in a very special way. Memorizing new material can hardly be called "thinking." But you will help yourself enormously if, as you memorize, you think about the grammar section that goes with each set of basic sentences. The grammar analysis of lesson 2, for example, tells you about verb endings. After you have read this section, and have said the examples out loud, start memorizing the basic sentences. Every time you say a verb form, fit it mentally into the scheme that has just been explained to you: general form, *ich*-form, *er*-form. This ability to think about the structure of the language is the one big advantage you have over a child; make full use of it.

*The value of review.* In the long run, memorizing boils down to a constant process of learning, forgetting a bit, re-learning, forgetting a little less, and then re-learning again and again, until the memorized material becomes second nature. The suggestions we have given will help you to go through this memorizing process as efficiently as possible. To reinforce your memorizing, the schedule of assignments calls for repeated reviewing of earlier material. We hope

that all of this will enable you to learn to speak German with reasonable fluency. If you still have trouble, the best suggestion we can make is that you do even more reviewing. Continue doing a conscientious job on each lesson as it is assigned; then spend a little extra time going over the material of past lessons. Quite often a little extra reviewing like this is all a person needs to catch up with the rest of the class.

*A final request.* Keep these sheets handy so that you can refer to them off and on as you learn German. If you develop some good study techniques of your own, let us know about them so that others can benefit from your experience.

#### SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO READ GERMAN

*How NOT to read.* The following method is guaranteed to waste a maximum of time and to produce minimum results. Start off with the first sentence of the assignment, read along until you come to a word you don't know, and look it up in the vocabulary. Then read along to the next word you don't know, look THAT up in the vocabulary, etc., ad nauseam. By following this method you will need about four hours to cover the assignment, and by the time you're through you will have looked up so many different words that you will probably not remember a single one of them.

*Translating versus reading.* The goal you should aim for is the ability to pick up a German book and understand what it is all about. You will never reach this goal by doing only word-for-word translation. Some of you may have had the experience of translating Latin in high school. The writer of these lines always got "A" in his high school Latin, and always delighted the teacher with his splendid translations. But at the end of four brilliant years he discovered that, though he could translate with the best of them, he was totally unable to sit down with a Latin book and read it for content. The reason was, of course, that nobody had ever made him READ (as opposed to translate) Latin, and he was too stupid to realize that he should have done it for himself.

*Intelligent guessing.* If you are ever going to learn how to read for content, just about the most important skill for you to acquire is that of intelligent guessing, that is, figuring out what a word must mean because of the context in

which it is used. We do this all the time in English. All of us know how to read a lot of words which we never use in speaking, or even in our own writing. Sometimes, quite unwittingly, we even make up pronunciations of our own. At about the age of twelve, the writer of these lines had a very useful private word *misle*, made up on the basis of its past tense form, spelled *misled*. He ~~new~~ exactly what the word meant; and yet he obviously had never heard it pronounced or looked it up in a dictionary. He had deduced the meaning solely by observing the contexts in which the word occurred. Lots of people have had the same experience, with this and other words; you may recall some private words of your own, and thus prove that you learned them only by observing their contexts.

*Repeated reading.* If you are going to deduce the meanings of words from their contexts—or, for that matter, if you are going to remember the meanings of words which you have looked up in the vocabulary—you will obviously have to read them more than once. Let's suppose that you have 6 pages to read, and that on each page there are 10 words which you don't know. If you go through the 6 pages just once, and look up each of the 60 words, you surely won't be able to remember more than 10 of them. Instead of that, look up only 30 (a more manageable number) and make intelligent guesses for the remaining 30. Then, with the time that you have saved in this way, re-read the 6 pages at least two more times (preferably at intervals of several hours). In this way you may be able to remember as many as 25 of the 30 words which you looked up; and you will also have a pretty good idea of the meaning of the 30 which you did NOT look up. Score this way: 25 certain and 30 probable. And that's a lot better than only 10 certain.

*How to get started.* When you start out to do some reading in any foreign language, the one cardinal rule to follow is this: NEVER LOOK A WORD UP IN THE VOCABULARY UNTIL YOU HAVE READ THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT OCCURS. There is no sure way of knowing just how far you've got to read to get the immediate context; it will vary from case to case. It would certainly be idiotic to look up a word before reading through the whole sentence in which it occurs, because (in German, at least) you

usually have to read that far to find the whole verb phrase. Some people prefer to read a whole paragraph, others a whole page or more. Perhaps the best over-all suggestion is this: read through the first sentence; and then keep on reading until you get lost. You may be able to follow along for a paragraph, or a page, or even the whole assignment.

*What to do next.* Let's assume that you've read through a paragraph before getting lost. Now go back to the beginning again, and read along until you come to the first word you can't reasonably guess at. Underline the word (so you can find it again quickly); look it up in the vocabulary; find the English translation which fits this sentence; put a pencil dot in the vocabulary margin beside the word (to show you've looked it up once); and then, turning back to the text, re-read the phrase in which the word occurs, trying to fix its meaning as you do so. Go through the first paragraph this way, looking up only the words you absolutely have to and making intelligent guesses at the others. Then tackle the following paragraphs in the same way, until you have read about half the assignment. At this point you will want to take a short break, if only to relieve the boredom. Lean back and stretch; and then, RE-READ THE PAGES YOU HAVE JUST DONE. This will use up only part of the time you have saved by making intelligent guesses, and it will do wonders. (The reason for doing it at this stage is that the whole section is still fresh in your memory, and a re-reading now will really tie down the loose ends. If you wait until later on, much of it will have grown cold.) Then go through the second half of the assignment, ending up with a re-reading again.

*Trouble spots.* Aside from words that you don't know, there are two other troubles you will run up against. First, there are the so-called "idioms": groups of words that mean more than the sum of their parts. Handle these just as you do single words: underline them, and look them up in the vocabulary, putting a pencil dot beside them there. Secondly, despite all the help that a vocabulary gives you, there will be passages here and there which you just can't understand. The most important thing to remember here is: DON'T WASTE TIME ON THEM. If you can't understand such a passage the first time through, put a vertical line in the margin

beside it, and read on ahead. Quite often you will pick up a clue later on, and the difficulty will be cleared up when you do the re-reading. But don't waste time on it even then. If, after a second honest try, you still can't figure out what it means, put a second vertical line in the margin, and ask your teacher to explain it to you when you come to class. After all, helping you with such difficult passages is part of what he gets paid for.

*Nuisance words.* The above method, besides helping you to read efficiently, carries with it a number of interesting by-products. The underlines automatically furnish you with a list of the words and idioms you had to look up; the single vertical lines in the margin show you which passages caused trouble the first time through; and the double vertical lines indicate the passages you had to ask your teacher about. All of this is extremely useful for reviewing later on. But perhaps most important of all are the dots you put in the vocabulary margin each time you look a word up. It is a well known phenomenon that every reader has his own private set of nuisance words: words that he just can't seem to remember, and has to look up again and again. The dots in the vocabulary margin will automatically furnish you with a list of your own nuisance words. After you have read fifty pages or so of the book, run through the vocabulary and make a list of all the words that have more than two dots beside them. There won't be many such words; and if you spend a little extra time on them, you will save yourself a lot of useless vocabulary-thumbing later on.

*Don't do it the hard way.* The method outlined above is not the only way to read a foreign language, but we think it is probably the most efficient one. Traditionally, students have used three other general methods. The first is to write out a full English translation of everything. This is so wearisome a process that, fortunately, it has been followed by only a minute number of eager beavers. The second method is to make a list of all the words that have been looked up, together with their English translations. This is highly recommended for students who have time to kill and don't enjoy bridge or the movies; but, again, the sheer mechanical labor involved is out of all proportion to the benefits received. The third

method is to write an English translation over each word that has been looked up in the vocabulary. This cuts down considerably on mechanical labor, but ultimately it defeats its own purpose: when you re-read such a passage, your eye will run along the printed line, skip up to read the translation, and never even see the German word which is what you are trying to learn in the first place. If you've GOT to write down the translation, for heaven's sake do it IN THE MARGIN, not between the lines of the text. This will certainly do no harm; but we doubt that it is worth the time and effort involved. However, suit yourself on this point.

*The worst part about reading German.* Let's face it: the worst part is German word order. (Mark Twain said he once read a whole German book without understanding a bit of it. Reason: the last six pages were missing, and they contained all the verbs.) As English speakers, we obviously want to find the subject of a sentence first, and then the verb and its objects and modifiers. So do just that. As you read along, first spot the verb (which will be second in a statement, last in a subordinate clause) and then the subject (which, obviously, is going to be in the nominative). Then get the whole verb phrase, INCLUDING THE PART WHICH WILL BE AT THE END (accented adverb, participle, infinitive, etc.). With that much out of the way, the rest usually falls into line without too much trouble.

*The best part about reading German.* As you know, German doesn't have to have a special word for "expert": it combines *das Fach* "subject, branch of knowledge" and *der Mann* "man" into *der Fachmann*. And to make the corresponding adjective it just adds *-isch*: *fachmännisch*. This odd habit of German is a godsend to the poor foreigner: it means that he can understand big words just by knowing the commonest little ones. Make full use of this peculiarity of German. Whenever you look up a big word which is obviously made up of little ones, TRY TO FIND OUT WHAT THE PARTS MEAN. The full word is often more than just the sum of its parts (*vor* "in front of" plus *der Teil* "part" gives *der Vorteil* "advantage"; contrast *der Nachteil* "disadvantage"); but even in cases like this a knowledge of the parts will make the whole word a lot easier to remember.

*Reading in lab hours.* Reading will be handled very differently in the labs and in the drills. For lab you will be asked to read (just for example) pages 1-6 of a book. Do the reading in the way that has just been suggested. When you get to lab, the teacher will spend the first half of the period on these 6 pages. Obviously he is going to do a bit of checking up, to see how well you have done the work. But his main function is to answer any questions you may have, and to help you with the difficult passages which you noted. Once this part of the class work is done, he will spend the second half of the period helping you to do an unprepared translation starting with page 7 and going as far as the time allows. His function here is to help you cover as many of the following pages as possible, and to give you the benefit of his own training in helping you to understand constructions, break big words down into little ones, etc.

*Reading in drill hours.* For the following drill hour you will be asked to prepare through page 12 of the book. Read over the pages which the lab teacher helped you do, and then continue on to page 12 in the usual manner. At this point, take a good look at the assignment sheet: note that it does NOT say "pages 7-12," but "pages 1-12." BE SURE THAT YOU RE-READ THE SIX PAGES PREPARED FOR LAB THE PRECEDING DAY, and then give the next 6 pages a final going over. This re-reading of material which you have learned and then partly forgotten is where you really get rich dividends. When you get to drill, the teacher will be glad to help you with any passages which caused you difficulty; and he may want to give you a bit of paractice in reading German out loud, since this is a very useful skill. But he will reserve most of the period for TALKING ABOUT THE CONTENT OF ALL TWELVE PAGES (in German, obviously). He may ask you questions about what happens in these twelve pages; he may ask you to re-tell the story in your own words; he may try to get an argument started about one of the characters in the story; or he may tell you some experiences of his own which are connected with the content of the story. Whatever he does, his sole aim will be to get you to talk and hear as much German as possible.

WILLIAM G. MOULTON

Cornell University



# Investigaciones de literatura española por emprender

HOMENAJE A S. GRISWOLD MORLEY

EN MIS lecturas y andanzas bibliográficas por bibliotecas y archivos, con objeto de recoger materiales para el *Manual de bibliografía de la literatura española*, cuya primera parte ha visto la luz recientemente,<sup>1</sup> he hallado abundancia y excelencia en libros, monografías, y artículos de revistas consagrados a estudios y textos de ciertos literatos, y, en cambio, escasez, mediocridad y, en ocasiones, ausencia total de trabajos, acerca de otros escritores. Algo semejante me ha ocurrido con las obras destinadas a las materias en general: géneros literarios, épocas, orígenes, generaciones, movimientos, escuelas, fuentes, influencias, crítica, estilística, metodología, etc.

He anotado, pues, lo que existe y al mismo tiempo lo que no existe. He logrado reunir una información bibliográfica positiva y otra negativa. Todo ello con las limitaciones que una bibliografía impone, ya que nunca ha de resultar completa.

Con las papeletas de la segunda clase, o sea de las omisiones, vacíos o lagunas que aun se observan en nuestra historia literaria,<sup>2</sup> he formado un fichero, del cual he entresacado ya un montoncito de fichas con destino al volumen de homenaje en honor de Mr. Archer Milton Huntington (Wellesley, 1952, Wellesley College), y hoy extraigo otro montoncito dedicado como homenaje al Profesor S. Griswold Morley. Servirán esas fichas, creo yo, para señalar algunos asuntos vacantes, algunos sectores nuevos o poco explorados y abrir campos desconocidos a futuras investigaciones; podrán sugerir temas para la redacción de tesis doctorales, ensayos, artículos, conferencias, cursos u otros trabajos. He aquí unas pocas.

## Siglo XI

ORÍGENES DE LA POESÍA LÍRICA.—El hebraísta S. M. Stern ha mostrado recientemente un nuevo horizonte a las investigaciones rela-

tivas al origen de las poesías líricas no sólo de España, sino de toda Europa. En 1948 descubrió veinte cancioncillas hispano-hebreas y una hispano-árabe, y el arabista, G. S. Colin, otras cuarenta hispano-árabes, las cuales estudia actualmente el arabista español Emilio García Gómez, quien las editará. Algunas de ellas pertenecen a la primera mitad del siglo XI y las otras a la segunda mitad, lo que prueba documentalmente la aparición de la lírica en España un siglo antes de surgir la poesía de los trovadores provenzales. Estas cancioncillas en español, a veces mezclado de árabe, llamadas *jaryas* o *jarchas*, se hallan al final de unas poesías hispano-hebreas o hispano-árabes conocidas con el nombre de *muwassahas* o *moaxas*. En su origen la *moaxa* es árabe; luego fué imitada por los poetas hebreos. La *jarya* es una canción amatoria. Una doncella enamorada se lamenta de la ausencia de su amado. Es una 'canción de amigo.'

Estos hallazgos, verdaderamente trascendentales, revolucionan la teoría del origen de la lírica europea, acerca de la cual se equivocaron Jeanroy, Le Gentil y otros críticos franceses y suscitan problemas que deben estudiarse. Los investigadores, que han de ser arabistas o hebraístas, a la par que hispanistas y romancistas, se lanzarán en busca de las soluciones. Ya se ha inaugurado una serie de trabajos que se espera continúen. La bibliografía, hasta ahora, es la siguiente:

S. M. Stern, "Les vers finaux en espagnol dans les 'muwassahs' hispano-hébraïques,"

<sup>1</sup> H. Serís, *Manual de bibliografía de la literatura española*, primera parte, Syracuse, New York, 1948, xliii, 422 p. (Centro de Estudios Hispánicos, Syracuse University.)

<sup>2</sup> Véase R. Schevill, "Desiderata in our histories of the Spanish language and literature," *Modern Language Forum*, 1934, XIX, 9-17.



*Al-Andalus*, 1948, XIII, 299-346.—S. M. Stern, "Un 'muwassah' arabe avec terminaison espagnole," *Al-Andalus*, 1949, XIV, 214-218.—F. Cantera, "Versos españoles en las 'muwassahas' hispano-hebreas," *Sefarad*, 1949, IX, 197-234.—Dámaso Alonso, "Cancioncillas 'de amigo' mozárabes: Primavera temprana de la lírica europea," *Rev. de Filol. Esp.*, 1949, XXXIII, 297-349.—Tres artículos de Emilio García Gómez: "Más sobre las 'jarchas' romances en 'muwassahas' hebreas," *Al-Andalus*, 1949, XIV, 409-417; "Nuevas observaciones sobre las 'jarchas' romances en 'muwassahas' hebreas," *Al-Andalus*, 1950, XV, y "El apasionante cancionerillo mozárabe," *Clavileño*, 1950, I, n.º 3, p. 16-21.—R. Menéndez Pidal, "Cantos románicos andalusíes, continuadores de una lírica latina vulgar," *Bol. Acad. Esp.*, 1951, XXXI, 187-270.—L. Spitzer, "The Mozarabic lyric and Theodor Frings' theories," *Comp. Lit.*, 1952, IV, 1-22.—H. Serís, "The oldest European lyric verse is Spanish," *Books Abroad*, 1952, XXVI.—Como antecedentes consúltense: J. M. Millás Vallicrosa, "Sobre los más antiguos versos en lengua castellana," *Sefarad*, 1946, VI, 362-371, y su libro *Yehudá Ha-Leví como poeta y apologista*, Madrid-Barcelona, 1947, p. 54-62.—Emilio García Gómez, "Sobre el nombre y la patria del autor de la muwassaha," *Al-Andalus*, 1934, II, 215-222 y 1948, XIII, 28-31, y "Sobre un posible tipo de poesía arábigo-andaluza," *Estudios dedicados a Menéndez Pidal*, Madrid, 1951, II.—R. Menéndez Pidal, "Poesía árabe y poesía europea," *Bull. Hisp.*, 1938, XL, 337-423 y Buenos Aires, 1941.—A. R. Nykl, "L'influence arabe-andalouse sur les troubadours," *Bull. Hisp.*, 1939, XLI, 305-315, e *Hispano-Arabic poetry, and its relations with the old Provençal troubadours*, Baltimore, 1946, y el primero de todos J. Ribera, *El Cancionero de Abencuzmán*, Madrid, 1912, y *Disertaciones y opúsculos*, Madrid, 1928, 2 vols.

### Siglo XV

CANCIONERO DEL CONDE DE HARO.—Me toca tratar ahora de otro descubrimiento reciente, efectuado por el hispanista norte-americano D. W. McPheeters, de un cancionero manus-

crito del siglo XV. Se hallaba en la librería anticuaria de H. P. Kraus de Nueva York. Procedía de la biblioteca de Lord Holland, vendida últimamente en Londres en pública subasta. El profesor McPheeters identificó un escudo nobiliario de la última hoja del códice como perteneciente al Conde de Haro. El escudo está dibujado en el estilo del Renacimiento, siglo XV. La letra del cancionero es gótica de la misma centuria. El profesor McPheeters publicó una descripción pormenorizada en el *Catalogue no. 54* de Kraus, New York [1950], p. 1-4. Véase también H. Serís, *Bull. Hisp.*, 1951, LIII, 318-320. Fija la fecha del ms. entre 1454 o 1458 y 1470. Contiene poesías de Pérez de Guzmán, Santillana, Mena, Agraz, Castillo, Dueñas, Escobar, Gómez Manrique, Montañes, Ribera, Rodríguez de la Cámara y Juan de Valladolid, algunas, al parecer, inéditas y otras con variantes. Aquí tenemos materia para pesquisas literarias, que se pudieran realizar ahora si conociéramos el paradero actual del códice, porque éste pasó como un meteoro por Nueva York, adquirido en seguida por un prócer, cuyo nombre se ignora, residente, según parece, en París, y a su biblioteca particular ha ido a parar. Se tiene la esperanza, sin embargo, de que su nuevo poseedor lo done a la Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid.

RODRÍGUEZ DE ALMELA O ALMELLA, DIEGO (1426?-1489).—Se debe exortar a nuestros hispanistas a editar el *Compendio historial*, que todavía continúa inédito. Los historiadores de la literatura española asignan la fecha de 1491 a esta obra de Almela. En mi colaboración al homenaje a Mr. Huntington escribí, según los datos de mis papeletas: "acabado de redactar circa 1479 y presentado a los Reyes Católicos en 1491." Tengo que rectificar, y tenemos que rectificar todos, esta última fecha, pues en virtud de un hallazgo de Juan Torres Fontes, hecho público no hace mucho, en su estudio y edición de la *Compilación de los milagros de Santiago de Diego Rodríguez de Almela*, Murcia, 1946, el afamado historiador murciano había fallecido en 1489. No le era posible, por consiguiente, presentar en 1491 su obra manuscrita a los Reyes Católicos, aunque cabe la suposición

de que lo hiciera algún amigo o compañero del difunto. Igualmente, es preciso corregir el año de 1492, en el cual se creía que había ocurrido la muerte de Almela, por el susodicho de 1489. El Sr. Torres Fontes halló el dato en las *Actas Viejas del Cabildo* de la Catedral de Murcia, de 1489 (véase su monografía, p. xxvii y n. 32). Llega a la conclusión de que la fecha en que Almela terminó su *Compendio* debe estar comprendida entre 1484 y 1489.

El Sr. Torres Fontes da las firmas de los distintos manuscritos que se conservan, a saber: P-1, de letra de la segunda mitad del siglo XV, y no. 1535, de letra de principios del siglo XVI, ambos en la Bibl. Nac. de Madrid; U-10 y 12, letra de principios del siglo XVI, en la del Escorial, y uno en 3 vols., de 915 folios en total, en la Bibl. de M. Pelayo de Santander. El mismo Menéndez Pelayo había citado este manuscrito en sus *Orígenes de la novela*, II, 166 (*Obras compl.*) y M. Artigas, en su *Catálogo de los manuscritos de la Biblioteca [de] Menéndez Pelayo*, Santander, 1930, p. 385. En cambio, no incluye Torres Fontes otro ms. que posee la Bibl. del Palacio de Madrid. Los títulos son dos: *Compendio historial de las Crónicas de España* y *Copilación de las Corónicas et Estorias de España*, con dos versiones respec-

tivamente, la primera representada por los ms. de la Nacional y la segunda por el del Escorial. B. Sánchez Alonso, en sus *Fuentes de la Historia*, 2a. ed., 1927, I, p. 11 no. 75, registra un tercer título y un quinto, ms.: *Copilación y Genealogía de los Reyes de España*, s. XV, 318 f., Bibl. Nac. de Madrid, ms. no. 1979, "que comprende desde el Diluvio hasta Enrique IV" y añade erróneamente, como todos, "acabada en 1491."

La importancia de la publicación íntegra de esta obra de Almela la expone Menéndez Pidal en *La leyenda del Abad D. Juan de Montemayor*, Dresden, 1903 (Gesellschaft f. rom. Lit., 2 Bd.); 2a. ed. aum. en *Hist. y Epopeya*, Madrid, 1934, p. 183-196; véanse además las p. 104 y 136-144; donde edita un cap. del *Compendio historial*. Allí demuestra, con ejemplos, que Almela prosifica poemas épicos y leyendas heroicas. Tales prosificaciones pueden utilizarse para rehacer los textos épicos; de ahí el interés literario que tiene el *Compendio* para la historia de la épica española.

Me detengo en la Edad Media, dejando para otra ocasión la Edad de Oro, cuyas papeletas ocuparían mucho lugar.

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## *Eugénio de Castro and the Reaction to Symbolism in Portugal*

THE initial reaction in Portugal to Eugénio de Castro's first book of Symbolist poetry, *Oaristos*, may be characterized, without risk of exaggeration, as explosive.<sup>1</sup> Not only in the year of publication of that work, 1890, but also intermittently in the first half of the decade which followed, Castro faced varied expressions of incomprehension, ridicule, and violent attack, often personal as well as literary.

The causes of the vigorous character of the opposition are related to the nature of the poetic revolution which Castro endeavored to inaugurate. The fundamental premise of the strong manifesto which the preface to *Oaristos* constituted was that Portuguese poetry was in a state of decay; one of the corollaries was that the public and the critics were partially responsible for the development of such a condition. With two or three exceptions, Castro found that Portuguese poetry rested on a few dozen badly worn commonplace expressions, and that it was characterized by monotony in rhyme and lack of imagination in vocabulary. Bored with the slow ride of the local train bearing contemporary poets toward posterity, Castro wrote, the author of *Oaristos* changed to the express of originality, preferring the possibility of being derailed to the certainty of being eternally stalled in the crowded station of *Vulgaridade*. Putting his previous works behind him, he determined to cultivate a new manner that would be beyond the limits of the ordinary. That he succeeded in this last particular was a point beyond dispute, even for his most adverse critics. Relying almost entirely on the innovations of the French Symbolists, to whom he frankly admitted his debt, Castro introduced such innovations as a more flexible alexandrine, free verse, the rondel, the process of alliteration (which he called unknown), unusual and seldom repeated rhymes, and a vocabulary which he thought to be varied and select but which to his opponents was wildly

eccentric. The alliance with French Symbolism was cemented by Castro's proud declaration of the general influence of "esse estilo chamado decadente."

The technical nature of Castro's poetic revolt, then, is clearly outlined in his manifesto of 1890; less clear are the aims of this revolt as a reaction against the poetry of Realism in the ascendancy before the advent of *Oaristos*. In an essay on the poet Cesário Verde, Castro inserted several significant statements for an interpretation of the goals of the new poetry as a struggle for independence from the generation which immediately preceded it.<sup>2</sup> Criticizing the effects of too extensive an application of oratorical eloquence in poetry, Castro rejected the techniques of this whole generation and the work of Guerra Junqueiro and Gomes Leal in particular. This rejection may be attributed to the difference in method between the two schools, which, in turn, was due to a fundamental difference in aim; oratorical and rhetorical poetry was appropriate as the expression of the reforming zeal of the poetry of Realism, just as subtlety and refined musical tones were the natural expression of the purely artistic aims of Symbolism. The writers of the preceding generation were concerned with the material progress of society, the humanitarian sentiments of the public, with forming a literary parallel to the scientific methods then in vogue. The themes of their poetry were collective rather than personal; its mood was one of eloquence rather than intimateness. It was positive, emphatic, critical, objective; its form was completely subordinate to—and frequently obscured by—the social purposes of the writer. Castro found this kind of poetry *fortissimo* and

<sup>1</sup> Revision of a paper read at the Portuguese-Brazilian section of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association meeting in November, 1951.

<sup>2</sup> Eugénio de Castro, *Cartas de torna-viagem* (Lisboa, 1926), I, 87-102.

monotonous, particularly since it was the same kind of tune that had been played in Portuguese literature since the *Questão de Coimbra* of 1865. His aim was not humanitarian but esthetic, and was based on independent artistic premises. Just as words had a beauty of their own apart from their meaning, according to the dictum of Baudelaire which he adopted, so did the form of poetry have a validity apart from its content. Castro's protests implied that the artist must seek beauty in terms of his individual inspiration and without the guidance of sociological or philosophical considerations. Viewed in this light, Castro adapted the technique of Symbolism to Portuguese verse in an effort to free it from preoccupations that he felt were obstacles to its free artistic development. The basic difference between the two generations is best illustrated by José Régio's distinction of Guerra Junqueiro as the poet of the masses who dominates and moves his audience with dramatic gestures, whereas Castro is the poet of the elite, for the selected few who are invited to come to him.<sup>3</sup>

The opposition to Castro's work came from two general sources: established literary figures of the period and writers of no stature in the literary world whose work appeared in periodicals of large circulation. To the latter classification belong an outspokenly unfavorable review of *Oaristos*, by an anonymous writer, published in *Novidades* of Lisbon on April 20, 1890, and a whole series of parodies which began in the same paper the following day and continued for a period of two weeks. The review sets the keynote for all criticism of the work by classifying the prologue as impertinent and by criticizing the poet most for the poems that are most closely affiliated to the Symbolist movement; it is suggested that his poetry is of some slight value when the poet, in spite of himself, forgets that he is introducing a new school. The parodies, written by João Saraiva and António Feijó (the latter under a pseudonym), are devastatingly obvious in their burlesque of the innovating devices of Castro's poetry. Obviously mocking the poet's preference for the cultivation of refined sensory impressions, the newspaper recommends that these precious gems of poetry be read by the light of a candelabra of vermilion glass over a steam-

ing incense pot on a tripod, and warns that if this equipment is not obtained, the reader will lose most of the poetry's "sabor intencional." Alliteration, so prominently used in *Oaristos*, was an obvious gold mine for the parodist. In the third parody of the series, for example, the stanza of alliteration is used recurrently after each quatrain in exactly the same manner in which Castro had used it, imitating the latter's method to a nonsensical extreme:

Vidros videntes vendem-se na venda  
Do vidraceiro velho meu visinho . . .<sup>4</sup>

The eccentricities and neurotic tendencies that were part of the character of the central figure of *Oaristos* were also dwelt upon and enlarged, along with the unexpected comparison and the recondite vocabulary. After a week of this uninhibited sniping, the parodists called a temporary halt to their activities by reporting the death of the fictitious author of *Yvaristus* through an equally fictitious letter from a non-existent son. The letter emphasizes extravagances of speech to an uncomfortable degree and frequently lapses into the completely incomprehensible. A direct jibe is taken at the preface to *Oaristos* when the writer refers to the "poder vitalicio da rima, principio e fim de si mesma, . . . qual pescadinha de rabo na bôcca —symbolo frito da eternidade!"<sup>5</sup> An epitaph refers pointedly to the failure of a poorly equipped revolution in poetry. But apparently the parodies must have been too popular to be discarded so soon, for continuations appeared intermittently in subsequent issues of *Novidades* through May 6. The publication of this series in a newspaper of significance and wide circulation indicates that it had great popular appeal; the parodies also must have aroused curiosity on the part of some people who had never heard of *Oaristos* or its author before that time.

To these protests from the world of journalism one should also add the unfavorable review by Mariano Pina in *A Ilustração* of Paris (May 5, 1890), which exhorts the poet to be natural, imitate João de Deus and Camões, and send Verlaine and all of his hallucinations to the

<sup>3</sup> José Régio, *Pequena história da moderna poesia portuguesa* (Lisboa, 1941), p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> *Novidades*, April 22, 1890.

<sup>5</sup> *Novidades*, April 27, 1890.



Devil. One may also include here a review in *Novidades* (May 1, 1890) of *Azul*, a work by a disciple of Castro, which refers in uncomplimentary terms to the influence of the youthful leader of the new literary fashion. An entire novelette by Alberto Bramão entitled *O Cantagallo* is based on the trials and tribulations of a poetic revolutionary who hates the ordinary life of the world, takes the creed of *Nephelibatismo* seriously as a new religion, and does constant battle against the enemies he considers "the impure."

The criticism of well known literary figures in this period, with the exception of that of Fialho d'Almeida, is also in the form of poetic parodies; these are, one must admit, less successful on the whole in their humor and less vehement in their personal attack than the work of the unconsecrated writers. They are of considerable significance, however, as an indication of the nature of the reception given to a new poet by the leaders of the reigning generation of the literary world. Antônio Feijó continued his parodies and later collected them in a volume called *Bailatas*. Guerra Junqueiro wrote a letter to the editor of the *Diário illustrado* under a pseudonym and enclosed a poem, uncollected and practically unknown today, with the title "Hevarysta." If the title was not sufficient to disclose the identity of the poet being satirized, its first line, so similar in sound and construction to the first line of *Oaristos*, was irrefutable proof. In a letter which served as preface to a volume of poetry in the Symbolist manner by Júlio Brandão, published in 1892, Guerra Junqueiro presented a more sober criticism of Symbolism when he stated his opposition to literary schools and asked the poet to try to cultivate a more national and human kind of poetry. Still another poetic parody was written by the old unofficial poet laureate of Portugal, João de Deus. The "Carta a Francisco de Almeida" bears the subtitle "Em estylo nephelibata." It satirizes, not unusual images or exotic words, but the neurotic state of mind which often characterized the poems of the Portuguese Symbolists and which was so opposed to the optimistic sentimentality of João de Deus.<sup>6</sup>

The criticism of Fialho d'Almeida, although illuminated by brilliant flashes of sardonic

humor, is of a much more serious and analytical nature than all of the previously mentioned criticisms. *Os galos* has two sections devoted to Symbolism; the first deals with the philosophy of the movement as inaugurated by French writers, while the second is concerned with its Portuguese representatives.<sup>7</sup> For the former, it should be sufficient to point out that the critic views the French movement with complete lack of sympathy, primarily on the basis of what he asserts is its unintelligibility, that is, its tendency to accumulate words and phrases that are rhythmical but lacking in thought content. Castro and his followers fare even worse at Fialho's hands. Bringing what we might consider irrelevant biographical considerations into play, he charges that they are manifestly insincere: they are young, happy, have good digestion, and are free from anything which might predispose them to the pessimism and anguish they pretend to express in their poetry. The musicality of Castro's verse is oversimplified in *Os galos* as a tendency to stir emotions, not through the meaning of words, but through effects of sonority that leave the poet and the reader in a simple stunned, idiotic apathy. Most important of all, perhaps, is Fialho's acute annoyance at what he considers the brazen attitude of superiority with which Castro set out to create a new movement in poetry, based on an ideal and a technique unknown in Portugal before that time. The way in which Castro issued his challenge to contemporary literature was for Fialho an indication of snobbery and haughtiness which neither Hugo nor Junqueiro was guilty of in his proudest moments. He found that the Portuguese Symbolists' greatest lack was that of a goal, a direction, and a philosophy around which they could orient their art.

Summing up the nature of the resistance to Castro's program, then, we may say that it stemmed from both the press in general and

\* The items referred to here may be found in the following works: Antônio Feijó, *Poesias completas* (Lisboa, n. d.); Francisco Moreira das Neves, *Guerra Junqueiro, o homem e a morte* (Pôrto, 1942), pp. 228-230; Júlio Brandão, *O livro de Aglaís* (Pôrto, 1892); João de Deus, *Campo de flores*, 2nd ed. (Lisboa, 1896), p. 474.

<sup>7</sup> Fialho d'Almeida, *Os galos*, 2nd ed. (Lisboa, 1911), V, 283-309; VI, 63-89.



from the important figures of the literary generation in vogue in that period. Some of it was bitter, much of it was scornful, and all of it was founded on a misunderstanding of the aims of the poet. Alliteration, unusual vocabulary, surprising metaphors, freedom in poetic form, neurotic moods and themes: all are discredited in turn by the poet's opponents. Their attention is fixed particularly on the expressed intent to renovate Portuguese poetry, a program which they considered uncalled for and presumptuous. Their lack of appreciation for, and their criticism of, French Symbolism is obvious. In no case does an opponent of Castro support the work of Symbolism while criticizing the poet for the way in which he has interpreted it.

The greater part of the outcry against Symbolism tapered down to an uneasy conclusion around 1895. Perhaps the election of Castro to the Real Academia das Ciências in that year marked a recognition of his standing that tended to silence his opponents, or at least to give him a position that rendered him less vulnerable to attack than that of the little known youth of twenty-one who published *Oaristos*. Doubtless, too, the gradual discarding of the most unusual of the innovating devices in his verse helped to calm the troubled waters. By the end of the decade, in any case, few could dispute Castro's statement that the protests over his first Symbolist works had passed on into history.

The issues in this literary battle in Portugal naturally call to mind similar skirmishes in France at the initiation of the Symbolist movement and in the Hispanic world with the advent of *Modernismo*. It is possible, however, that the battle was more heated in Portugal and the focus of the issues sharper, due to reasons peculiar to the previous development of literature in that country. In this respect it is difficult to overestimate the great strength and popularity of the preceding generation, which had reigned practically undisputed for a quarter of a century. The same group is notable for the lack of any strong esthetic current in poetry, such as the French had with the Parnassians, which could have served both as a transition and a buffer zone between the two opposing camps. Secondly, the personality of Castro—proud, flamboyant, challenging, youthfully impermanent—was a natural target for personal criticism and a natural obstacle to an objective estimation of his aims for literature. Finally, *Oaristos*, published less than three months after the English ultimatum to Portugal and all its political consequences, ran directly counter to a rising tide of nationalism, and suspicion was automatically directed to a group of poets guided by cosmopolitan taste and by the influence of a foreign literary movement.

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## *The Need of a New Approach to Modern Language Study*

"By every language you learn, a new world is opened before you. It is like being born again; and new ideas break upon the mind with all the freshness and delight with which we may suppose the first dawn of the intellect to be accompanied."

**I**F THE study of modern languages were properly directed towards its highest goal, it could undoubtedly become one of the most valuable and most vital factors in our education.

Unfortunately, all that such a study means to many people at the present time is the learning of grammatical rules and of the various parts of speech; the memorizing of common words and phrases that may be used in ordinary conversation, and the translation of a number of simplified short stories, plays and novels, some of which may well be read in an English version.

This view, of course, is not entirely correct. In our colleges and universities, at least, a serious effort is made to give the student not only a colloquial knowledge of modern languages, but also an historical background of the countries in which those idioms are spoken, together with an appreciation of their respective literature through the reading and discussion of the main works of representative authors in their original form.

Commendable as this approach may be, however, it is not completely satisfactory. Its scope, in my opinion, is still too narrow and needs to be enlarged. The study of a modern language should not be limited to grammar, conversation, composition, history and literature, as is now the general practice, but should include lectures on art, music, philosophy, social and educational institutions, customs, habits and traditions of the people of France, Italy, Spain or Germany, as the case may be, so as to enable the student to understand their character, their mentality and psychology, their culture and civilization which in many ways are very different from our own.

In order to carry out this program of studies successfully, the teacher must be especially well qualified. His High School and University training is not a sufficient preparation for the task that lies ahead. He must also spend some time in the foreign country and learn to speak its language fluently, feelingly and idiomatically. He must visit its principal cities, towns and villages, its museums and art galleries, its churches and theatres; he must come into close contact with its people by taking an active part in their every day life and must absorb something of their spirit, of their environment and attitude of mind, if he ever expects to interpret them adequately to his own students.

Moreover, since he will hardly have any occasion to speak or even hear the foreign language outside of his class room, it is imperative that he return to that country periodically to keep in touch with it and improve his knowledge of it. Otherwise his instruction will lose much of its weight and effectiveness, and his students' interest and enthusiasm will seriously decline. The fact must be fully recognized that the foreign country is to the modern language teacher what the laboratory is to the scientist. It is absolutely indispensable and consequently every encouragement and assistance should be given him to make the best of that opportunity to progress in his career.

Anyone who has a clear conception of what modern language teaching means will readily admit that a mastery of the spoken tongue is essential not merely for communicating with others, but also for the understanding of its literature.

As George Ticknor has so aptly pointed out: "The classic authors can not be understood without some knowledge of the popular feeling

and colloquial idiom with which their minds have been nourished and of which their works are full; for the characteristic peculiarities and essential beauty and power of their gifted minds are concealed in those idiomatic phrases, those unobtrusive particles, those racy combinations which, as they were first produced by the prompt eloquence and passions of immediate intercourse can be comprehended and felt only by those who seek them in the sources from which they flow, so that, other things being equal, he will always be found best able to read and enjoy the great writers in a foreign language, who, in studying it,—whether his progress has been little or much—has never ceased to remember that it is a living and a spoken tongue.”<sup>1</sup>

Once the necessary measures have been taken to provide for the best possible preparation of modern language teachers, the next step is to develop a keener and lasting interest in that subject in our secondary schools and universities.

In this respect, too, much remains to be done. While students in science, medicine, engineering, music, or art, for example, usually have a pretty good reason for electing such courses, the majority of those taking modern languages have none, unless it be that it is a prescribed subject and that in their estimation it can be learned with a minimum amount of effort. This is indeed a deplorable situation which calls for a quick and efficient remedy. It seems to me that before beginning the study of a modern language, the student should be told something about the benefits to be derived from it. He should be made acquainted with the names of the most famous men of France, Italy, Spain or Germany, both past and present, and with their outstanding achievements in the various fields of human endeavor. He should be given to understand that a knowledge of their language would make accessible to him their literary, scientific and artistic masterpieces which would be an invaluable aid in the development of his mental faculties, a source of

inspiration and a guidance to intellectual accomplishments. Secondly, it would place at his disposal numerous scholarly journals which would keep him abreast of the research work that has been done and is still being done in the leading countries of Europe, and would increase considerably his possibilities of success in the particular profession he plans to follow.

When these facts are made clear to the student, it will not be difficult for him to realize that the study of modern languages is extremely useful not only to the teacher and the literary man, but also to the painter, the sculptor, the architect, the musician, the mathematician, the chemist, the physicist, the botanist, the biologist, the sociologist, the economist, the anthropologist, the physician, the lawyer, the businessman, the politician and the diplomat.

Indeed, that subject, because of a unique and supreme advantage it possesses, can be of great benefit to our entire community and to humanity at large.

If carried on along the lines I have suggested, the study of modern languages would lead to a sound and intelligent comprehension of the cultural, social and spiritual life of other peoples. This, in turn, would enable our native and foreign elements to appreciate one another's characteristic qualities and peculiar background and would subsequently bring about a gradual elimination of racial and religious prejudices and a greater national unity and solidarity.

Furthermore, it would promote a mutual understanding, better relations and stronger bonds of sympathy and friendship between nations, all of which would contribute in a most practical and effective way to the establishment of permanent peace and good will in this sick and troubled world of ours.

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<sup>1</sup> A Lecture on “the Best Methods of Teaching the Living Languages,” delivered in Boston in 1832.

## *A Course in Mexican Civilization*

IT IS often said by teachers of foreign languages that one of the benefits to be derived from language study is better world understanding and cultural relations. It is nevertheless true that too frequently we do not capitalize upon this avowed cultural aim and purpose in the development of courses in the foreign language on the culture, traditions, customs and similar material of the countries concerned.

There are courses offered in Spanish life and civilization, but here in the Southwest there lies within a few hours drive a completely different civilization. Its historical bases, its traditions, language, cultural patterns, religious development and its whole psychological makeup are completely different from our own Anglo-Saxon heritage. I speak of Mexico, and in the study of her civilization one can find a wealth of most interesting and provocative material that will challenge the attention and curiosity of almost any student in the Southwest or in any other part of our country.

My first connection with a course covering material of this type was in our Texas State College for Women Summer School of Spanish in Saltillo, Mexico. There my duties were those of coordinator, with the lectures given by different Mexican professors on various aspects of the subject matter. This past year when I approached the matter of giving such a course on our own campus, I was confronted with something of a problem because of the extensiveness of the field and also because of the lack of any textbook material for the course. However, the Mexican Government has itself unwittingly provided the answer.

There was begun a few years ago the publication of an inexpensive series known as the *Biblioteca Enciclopédica Popular*. This was published weekly in small booklets (similar to our various pocket editions) which sold for a few *centavos* each. The Secretaría de Educación Pública undertook such a task in order to get into the hands of the masses inexpensive but worthwhile reading material. A great many of

the numbers have to do with matters of Mexican culture, folklore, history, etc., and are therefore invaluable in a study of Mexican culture. Most of these books run between ninety and one hundred pages, but occasionally one goes to around one hundred twenty-five pages. To date over two hundred separate numbers of the series have appeared. The present price is fifty *centavos* per copy and the books can be obtained easily from Librería de Porrúa Hermanos or other book houses in Mexico.

In outlining the course it was the definite feeling that it should not be one in Mexican history—our Department of History is doing a good job there—but that it should delve more into the soul of the people. Enough history would be necessary of course to give a certain continuity of background, but the life of the people that made the history was of the greater importance.

In choosing booklets for classroom use the available titles were carefully studied, and the following ones were decided upon; the numbers are those given to the series by the Secretaría de Educación Pública:

Serial No.	Title
198	Clavijero—Historia antigua de México (Selecciones)
73	Episodios de la Guerra de la Independencia
71	Romances de la Guerra de la Independencia
75	La vida de México en 1825 (Selecciones)
14	Marquesa Calderón de la Barca—La vida en México (Selecciones)
175	Chapultepec en la historia de México
93	García Cubas—El libro de mis recuerdos (Selecciones)
126	Campos—El folklore literario y musical (Selecciones)
79	Documentos de la Revolución Mexicana
133	Los corridos de la Revolución
183	Estudio acerca de la educación fundamental en México—el Comité de U.N.E.S.C.O.

The course begins by giving general background in the ancient civilizations without which one does not understand modern Mexico. Historically, brief attention was given to the



Conquest, Independence, the Reform movement, the ill fated empire of Maximilian and Carlotta, Porfirio Díaz and the Revolution. Throughout the course some time was devoted to folklore, the *corridos*, national types and customs, and the broad aspects of the educational problems. The help of other departments was solicited and lectures were given by specialists in each field on folklore, Mexican art, Mexican dances, and problems of food and nutrition. Colored films and slides on art, archeology, customs and travel also added to the interest and variety of the course.

The class was for the most part conducted in Spanish, and each student was asked to make one oral report in Spanish. Material for these reports was again taken largely from the *Biblioteca Enciclopédica Popular*; below is a partial list of titles well suited to this program:

Serial No.	Title
182	Mitos y leyendas del antiguo México
38	La religión de los aztecas
3	Bernal Díaz—Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España (Selecciones)
52	Fernández de Lizardi—Selections from <i>El Periquillo</i>
36	Leona Vicario—Heroína de la Independencia
5	Discursos de Benito Juárez
9	Micrós—Cuentos y crónicas
80	Francisco I. Madero
147	Mexicanidad y educación
130	La Ciudad de México
127	Jalisco
101	Puebla
107	Michoacán
171	Vera Cruz
21	Oaxaca
53	Yucatán
50	La tribu Kikapoo
68	Los yaquis
25	Los mayas
166	El alma de Campeche en la leyenda maya
106	Recursos de México

Students did collateral reading in the college library also, and in it there is a good collection of materials on the various topics mentioned. During the course each student prepared two papers in Spanish on subjects of

special interest to her. It would be impossible to give a complete bibliography here, but a few outstanding titles will give something of the idea of the material.

- Covarrubias, Miguel, *Mexico South* (1946), Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y.
- Fernández, Justino, *El arte moderno en México* (1937), Antigua Libería Robredo, México.
- García Cubas, Antonio, *El libro de mis recuerdos* (1945), Ed. Patria, S.A., Apt. Postal 784, México, D.F.
- González Obregón, Luis, *Las calles de México*, 2 vols. (1936), Ediciones Botas, México.
- Gruening, Ernest H. *Mexico and Its Heritage* (1928), The Century Co., New York-London.
- Helm, MacKinley, *Modern Mexican Painters* (1941), Harper & Brothers, New York-London.
- Mayer-Serra, Otto, *Panorama de la música mexicana desde la independencia hasta la actualidad* (1941), El Colegio de México.
- Sáenz, Moisés, *México integro* (1939), Imprenta Torres Aguirre, Lima, Peru.
- Salazar, Rosendo, *México en pensamiento y acción* (1926), Editorial Avante, México.
- Schwendener, Norma, *Legends and Dances of Old Mexico* (1934), S. A. Barnes & Co., Inc.
- Teja Zabre, Alfonso, *Breve historia de México* (1935), La Impresora, México.
- Toor, Frances, *A Treasury of Mexican Folkways* (1947), Crown Publishers, N.Y.
- Vaillant, George C., *Aztecs of Mexico* (1941), Doubleday Doran & Co., Garden City, N.Y.
- Wolfe, Bertram D., *Diego Rivera* (1939), Alfred A. Knopf, N. Y.

The course has been one which the writer has thoroughly enjoyed giving and one in which he felt that the students showed keen interest. The presentation of material of this type is an important phase of our work which must not be overlooked. For the student who enters this kind of class for purely cultural and humanistic reasons the horizons of international understanding are widened. For one who expects to use the language in the foreign country the material is of great value in orientation. For the prospective language teacher it presents a variety of material that will enrich his background and hence his instruction and make him an asset to the foreign language program.

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## *We Put Our Children in a French School*

WHEN our friends learned that we were about to embark on a year in Paris, their first question almost always was: What are you going to do about the children's schooling? And they were somewhat horrified to learn that we proposed to postpone our decision until we actually reached our destination and were faced with the problem. Our two boys were nine and twelve, and our little girl was three. Of course, we were by no means indifferent to the solution of the problem, and so we had talked with various friends about their own European experiences. One of these, a college teacher of French, and like ourselves a strong supporter of the public as opposed to the private school, had tried the experiment of placing his children in a Paris *Ecole Communale*, but it had not worked well. The children were picked on by their schoolmates, the building was antiquated, the classes were over-large and the language barrier was seemingly insurmountable. A French colleague to whom he mentioned some of these things was horrified that he had even considered the public school in his area as a solution. He admitted that in theory the public school was the mainstay of democracy, but he felt that the limited resources of his country during the post-war period had made it impossible for the standards to be maintained. He insisted, therefore, that a private school was the only suitable place for two American children. Our friend reluctantly consented, and in the private school his children did much better. In our own case, we decided that this was one of the hurdles we would jump when we came to it. We knew also that there was an American school in Paris, but since we wished the children to learn French it seemed rather absurd to place them in a school where they would hear nothing but English and would be deprived entirely of French contacts.

Once we reached Paris, we set to work on the problem in earnest. We discovered at once that there was an excellent coeducational

private school in our immediate neighborhood, within walking distance, in fact, and so my wife and I decided to visit its director. The aspect of the school's corridors did not inspire confidence. The building appeared to be made up of a jumble of ill-connected buildings with small courtyards in between. The courtyards were ill-paved and dusty. The walls of the buildings seemed in need of paint, and some of the treads on the stairways were out of repair. Altogether the school was unprepossessing. Still we decided to continue our errand, and we went on to find the office of the director. The latter, a short, scholarly man, received us pleasantly but briefly and referred us to his two assistants, one in charge of the upper and one in charge of the lower school.

The director of the upper school was quite willing to accept our older boy, although we told him quite frankly that the lad knew not one word of French. The director of the lower school was harder to convince. She said that she did not see how an American boy would profit from schooling in a foreign language, her classes were already full, the over-burdened teachers would not have time to give our son special attention, etc., etc. We persevered, however, insisted that our younger son was a good scholar, promised that we would ask no special favors or conditions, and finally succeeded in having him admitted. We were pleased with our efforts, but we could not help shaking our heads a bit at the prospect of our children's spending five days a week within those dreary walls, and when we saw our younger boy wipe away a furtive tear as he left us at the door of his classroom on the first day of school, we felt somewhat badly ourselves.

To our surprise and satisfaction both boys seemed quite unemotional about their morning's experiences when they returned home that first noon. Happily there had been no hazing, and their teachers had allowed them to take a quite inconspicuous place in the morning's activities. Richard, the older of the

two, had been placed by his teacher next to a French boy his own age who had spent a year in New York City, and since this lad knew a lot of English he clung to him like a tired swimmer to a raft. The days passed into weeks. Neither boy seemed to know any French at all, but we told ourselves that this would take time. The best thing for us to do was to let well enough alone. By Christmas we began to be disturbed by the fact that neither boy seemed to have the faintest idea as to what was going on in his classroom. Furthermore, neither boy had enough confidence to run the simplest errand in one of the neighboring shops. Evidently the placing of Richard next to a boy who knew English had proved his undoing. The two spent a lot of their time talking to each other with the result that the teacher decided to separate them for the sake of peace and order in the classroom. Our younger boy, Geoffrey, seemed to have picked up a smattering of French but his grades in general were poor and his progress extremely slow. He was irritable and frustrated about his achievements and declared that he never would learn "enough French to know what is going on."

At about this time I had a talk with the directress of the lower school. She reminded me of her misgivings about the boy's admission to the school, but surprisingly enough she was much more optimistic than we were about the future. She expressed the thought that Geoffrey might very well be on the point of finding himself, and she urged upon us a little more patience. The teacher of our older boy on the other hand took the trouble to seek us out. She, it seemed, was far from optimistic. Like us she had somehow assumed that with the passing of a couple of months the boy would understand everything, and his failure to do so irritated her. Despite this pessimism, her attitude impressed us both favorably, for it was obvious that if she had not been a conscientious person, eager to do a good job with her teaching, she would not have cared whether a single American in a class of thirty-five was doing good work or not. This time it was the parents' turn to be reassuring. I told Mademoiselle that it had occurred to me, first that it might not be easy for a boy of twelve to pick a

language "out of the air" as his younger brother was beginning to do, and second that he might have less of a feeling for languages than some others. I suggested that formal French lessons were in order. These I proposed to give him.

To make a long story short, the prophecy of the directress of the lower school with regard to our younger boy proved true. In February he brought home an excellent report card. In March he made the honor roll. In April he began to do his homework without help and began to overtake his French classmates. Except for an occasional word missing here and there his French was excellent. His teacher was delighted. The older boy began with the aid of a grammar to learn the language from the bottom, and if at the end of the year he was not a fluent speaker at least he understood almost all that was said and could express himself in simple conversation. If he still required help with his homework, it was also plain that the groundwork for future study of the language had been laid, and a second year abroad would probably have given him enough language for him to have absorbed subject matter as his younger brother was finally able to do.

During the course of the children's school experience frequent commentaries on the French school and its ways found their way in the family conversations. To begin with there were several features of the school which were unattractive. Its physical aspect was somewhat forbidding, as I have said. Its sanitary facilities in particular seemed inadequate, but if these things were apparent to the powers that be they were unfortunately without immediate resources to remedy the situation. In time, however, we became used if not reconciled to these things, and one night my wife remarked: "It's curious, isn't it, that with the French school's inadequate equipment it still manages to be a first-rate educational institution, while at home we have often had the youngsters in American schools that did a fifth-rate job with first-rate equipment." For in many respects the French school did a first-rate job. To begin with, homework assignments were always written in the *cahier*, a little book that had to be signed daily by

both parent and teacher. We always knew, therefore, exactly what the children were expected to do. It was also possible by means of the *carnet* to communicate if need be with the teacher and to have his written reply. This still seems to us a far better system than any we have encountered in the United States. At home it has usually been possible to find out whether or not the boys had homework only by the use of methods resembling the third degree. The *carnet* eliminated all that.

We also liked the order and discipline of the school. Not that there was not some occasional horseplay. That was natural. But a well-established system of demerits and rewards gave incentive for good work and good behavior. Particularly feared for some reason were the *observations* which were, as far as we parents could ascertain, nothing more than a little black mark in the teacher's book. These demerits could also be given, and often were, by student monitors, and the latter had none of the guilt of the tattletale. Particularly coveted were the *bonnes notes* which were nothing more than little slips of pink paper, signed by the teacher and the assistant director, and signifying that for the week past the student in question had had no grades less than passing in any of his subjects, including conduct. This would not seem to be a reward difficult of achievement, but evidently the inclusion of the conduct factor made it so, for whenever one of our boys achieved one of these slips his pride in the fact was extraordinary.

The text books that are in use also deserve notice. They seem for the most part to be well-written and free from bias. Geography and history, two areas in which national prejudices might have been most apparent, and perhaps most excusable, were treated in simple and readable fashion. The latest political and economic developments were presented factually and completely. The curriculum was for the most part the classical one, with emphasis on mathematics, language and social science. This for our part we heartily approved, and we take some satisfaction in knowing that there are at least two American children who can analyze

a sentence and who are not frightened by the terms "adjective," "noun," and "verb." Art and music are also regularly taught and well taught, and there was evident progress in both boys' musical knowledge and drawing ability during the year. Progressive education is also being tried on a sensible scale, and the class in which our older boy was placed added visits to museums, factories and points of interest to its study of Latin and mathematics.

Physical education, perhaps because of a lack of space and equipment, is still a gymnasium subject. Nor is there any evidence that the French have any wish to substitute our sports program for their gymnastics. Emphasis is on agility, physical fitness and muscle building, and the public exhibition given at the end of the year was an ample demonstration that parallel bars and pyramids can be good fun as well as good exercise.

Everything considered our experiment in giving the boys a year in a French school was a success. The younger boy learned French as everyone prophesied that he would. If the older boy failed to master it as completely as his brother at least one reason may be found in the fact that he had probably reached the upper age limit for the absorption of a language by imitation. The experience of friends has not been dissimilar to our own. It is quite evident that the younger the child the more rapid is his progress in learning a language by imitation alone. Parenthetically I may add that our little girl who was but slightly over three when we reached France was as bi-lingual as anyone could desire after seven months in a French nursery school. If our experience, therefore, can serve as a guidepost to other Americans planning to spend a year abroad, we would say: put your children in a local school. Before the year is over they will probably understand and speak the language well enough to profit from instruction in it. But even if they do not, they will probably learn a number of other things that are just as important.

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## Community Reading

**I** PLEDGE allegiance . . ." How often that old community chant of childhood comes back! The words? The intent? The simple or analogous meaning? Why not these as by-products of the chorus—the age-old pattern of man's dramatic or simple learning and self-expression?

Let's look, first, at the simple methods of early teaching. Rote learning was the easy, natural device of our early teachers. By means of nursery folk tales and games little ones were taught truths and patterns of a common language and culture. Later the Church recognized chorus work as a medium of instruction, as, also, did the Greeks.

Why not look to the folk-ways as a medium of our present day methods in language learning? Spanish, French, Italian, German—any language can adopt this simple technique along with grammar, vocabulary recognition and tone, and reading skills.

Community Reading, or what is generally labelled "group reading" or "reading in chorus," has many advantages when it is executed as a means by which we strive to attain fluency in pronunciation, facility in reading, familiarity with a foreign language, and a stimulation to read individually. We see it as a useful tool for quick self-development. The method? It's as simple and as old as civilization.

Community Reading in my Spanish class serves as an instrument in the elimination of self-consciousness, especially in initial experiences with a foreign language. Students have a tendency to be reticent toward reading—all because of possible error that they might make in pronunciation. This is particularly true of the over-sensitive student or the one of limited abilities. However, after the student reads the first few sentences, he automatically attunes himself to the reading and unconsciously continues with greater ease to the extent that the student with the least language aptitude or interest will be inspired to join the group. The timid one will read because he believes his voice to be lost in the group and his identity not

known. The pace must be slow—as a matter of fact, very slow in the beginning until the correct pronunciation comes. Gradually the tempo is increased and natural inflection of the voice will follow automatically. The teacher initiates the reading; the students follow. Gradually she withdraws into the background and remains so except to restore lagging vitality or to make an occasional correction.

Students may be reminded that the "caba-leros" have strong, resonant, clear voices, whereas the "señoritas" voices are soft, musical, alluring. This has a definite appeal to the adolescent who will attempt to conform.

Community Reading is also an excellent means of covering required material without the sense of pressure which the time element establishes. Consequently, the class is afforded an additional margin of time in which to go over passages for the analysis of grammatical structure, etc. (this is done casually—even incidentally—just by way of interesting comment).

In the above-mentioned paragraphs the advantages of community reading have been outlined in general terms, and may comprise a method to be used in classes where the fundamentals of grammar are being taught. However, this group pattern can also be extended to the advanced classes where occasional material contains passages of unusual structure for the student who has not been exposed to a formal study of grammar very recently. In literature courses often grammatical license is incurred which is confusing to the student at first reading. Here, too, community reading gives articulate recognition to such phraseology, to the subtle innuendo, to the niceties of the *turned* phrase, and to recognition of exalted language without which each language would be infinitely poorer.

We must be ever mindful of the fact that there is a tendency on the part of the student to read rapidly in order to terminate the material, and, as a result, he becomes so completely absorbed that he ignores pronunciation



to say nothing of the finer shadings of idiom and meaning peculiar to an appreciation of the language itself. There is the possibility, too, of the student's "just trying to keep up with the group." Consequently, he disregards the importance of correct pronunciation, inflection, and punctuation. Some may read too rapidly, others too slowly, mumbling. . . . To the indifferent student the printed page may be a mere collection of words set off by punctuation with, unfortunately, no lingual significance. Often the student meets new words which the instructor should pronounce in the Pre-study period, the Community Reading of the Class period giving opportunity for word recognition and working practice in pronunciation and relationship.

Community Reading should be the aftermath of the lesson, a means by which the instructor is able to ascertain the student's mastery of the fundamentals of the immediate language assignment. This will serve to tie up the loose ends, embellish the lesson, and give that touch of ornamentation which will stimulate interest. Community Reading should not become routine or daily practice. On the contrary, it should be resorted to only often enough so that students will anticipate the reading as an interesting experience which they are unable to duplicate outside the classroom. In fact, try Community Reading as a bit of dessert, on occasion. Your classes will beg for it. They like it. They *all* get a chance. They all want to get "the feel" of the language. Spanish . . . French . . . Italian . . . German . . . They'll all be talking back with all the idiomatic dash or finesse which means conscious awareness of the beauties of the language to say nothing of the incidental victories of student *and* teacher.

In order to have a more adequate picture of the experiment, let us assume that a class in beginning Spanish has read the following excerpt:

#### LA CARRERA DE SACOS

—El colegio de San Nicolás no *era* muy grande,—dijo Joaquín Durán.—*Tenia* unos sesenta alumnos. *Había* alumnos internos y externos, y plazas gratuitas para huérfanos. Yo *era* un alumno muy aplicado; *recibía* buenas notas en historia e idiomas. En general *me llevaba* muy bien con todo el mundo. *Me querían* los profesores lo mismo que casi todos mis compañeros. Sólo uno, Pedro Montañés,

*me demostraba* poca simpatía. No he podido explicarme esto todavía, pues nunca le hice nada. No *era* envidia, porque él *era* mejor alumno que yo. *Era* el primero de la clase. En todos los exámenes *recibía* notas de sobresaliente. El director siempre *hablaba* de él como el orgullo y la honra del colegio. *Era* un muchacho fuerte y sano, muy comunicativo con todo el mundo . . . excepto conmigo. ¿Por qué? No lo sé.

Todos los años, el día de San Nicolás, se *celebraba* el santo del patrón del colegio. Las familias de los alumnos *eran* invitadas. El director, hombre de iniciativa, *inventaba* algo nuevo para cada fiesta. Este año *iba* a ser una carrera de sacos. Se *había* ofrecido un premio de cinco duros al vencedor. ¡Cinco duros! Todos nos *considerábamos* capaces de ganar el premio.—\*

#### INTERPRETATION

The extent of the analysis will depend, principally, on the grammar treated in the particular lesson, and to what degree the teacher wishes to extend the recitation, the amount of material to be reviewed and the specific aims.

Example: The student identifies the tenses of the verb, classification, and translates to the English equivalent. In view of the fact that the passage is expressed in the *Imperfect Tense*, it will serve as excellent material for drill purpose of the Imperfect Tense of *regular*, *irregular*, *radical changing* and *reflexive* verbs.

#### ERA:

The irregular verb *SER* (to be), 2nd conjugation (er)—used to denote:

- a. permanency
- b. character
- c. description
- d. origin
- e. ownership
- f. nationality
- g. hour of the clock
- h. impersonal expressions
- i. occupation
- j. rank

*Era* was employed in this sentence in order to show a past descriptive quality.

#### TENÍA:

The irregular verb *TENER* (to have), 2nd conjugation (er)—denotes possession. Also employed to express:

- a. age
- b. physical and mental condition
- c. necessity
- d. obligation

In this sentence *tenía* expresses a past continuous condition.

\* John M. Pittaro—Alexander Green, *Cuentos Contados* (Chicago: D. C. Heath & Co., 1925), pp. 35-36.



**HABÍA:**

The impersonal form of the auxiliary irregular verb *HABER* (to have), 2nd conjugation (er).

The function of *había* in this case is to indicate a past existence.

**RECIBÍA:**

The regular verb *RECIBIR* (to receive), 3rd conjugation (ir).

The Imperfect is used here to render a past customary or habitual action.

**ME LLEVABA:**

The reflexive regular verb *LLEVARSE* (to get along), 1st conjugation (ar).

The reflexive pronoun precedes the verb immediately when the latter is inflected.

*Llevarse bien* is an idiom (to get along well).

**QUERÍAN:**

The radical-changing verb *QUERER* (to like—to want), 2nd conjugation (er), stem root “e” to “ie.”

The radical change that occurs in the stem root of the verb in the first, second, third persons singular and third person plural, in the present indicative is completely *ignored* in the *Imperfect*.

*ME* is the direct object pronoun of the verb; it precedes the verb because the latter is in the inflected or conjugated form.

*Me querían* is expressed in the Imperfect, simply because it is a “mental” verb.

**DEMOSTRABA:**

Again we have a radical-changing verb, *DEMOSTRAR* (to show—to demonstrate), 1st conjugation (ar), stem root “o” to “ue.” It, too, is preceded by a direct object pronoun for the same reason as that of *me querían*.

*Me demostraba*, renders a past descriptive action.

Thus we could continue analyzing each verb, but time and space do not permit; we conclude our experimental lesson by adding one point. From the above treatment, the students will be able to summarize “el cuento” of the *Imperfect Family* from the standpoint of its principal role: “to express past indefinite descriptive action or condition” by which we may render—

1. A past continuous action
2. A past descriptive action
3. A past customary or habitual action
4. Two past simultaneous actions
5. An action taking place when another occurred, that which occurred is expressed in the Preterite tense, the former in the Imperfect.
6. Past action of a person's state of mind. (Mental verbs require the Imperfect form.)

In respect to the effectiveness of Community Reading, the experience of the writer has been—with few negligible exceptions—that the students favor this project, precisely because they have the opportunity of *reading in chorus*. In this manner, they unconsciously acquire proficiency in their pronunciation, not only by hearing themselves but also their classmates and the teacher's occasional correction.

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# *A Modern Language Week*

## AN ADVENTURE IN WORLD CITIZENSHIP

**I**N THIS shrinking world it is more imperative than ever before for us to know our neighbors. This does not imply a mere surface acquaintance but rather a deep penetration of the foreign culture—language, geography, history, art, music, folklore, customs—in an effort to understand the thinking of foreign peoples and their reaction to certain stimuli, in short, their way of life.

Who is better qualified for this task than the foreign language teacher? In many cases he has actually lived among the people whose culture and spirit he is interpreting to American boys and girls. In any case, he has acquired a broader understanding of the problems and ideas of other lands through his training and reading in foreign literature.

We have long felt a need for a plan to interpret to the students within the school, as well as to the parents, business people, and other citizens of a given community, the necessity for foreign language study and the very great advantages of such a study.

Recently, we have had almost every week in the year set aside for emphasis on some idea, principle, or even commercial product. Why not a modern foreign language week? Such a language week would be an all-out effort to make every individual language-conscious, becoming aware of the impact of the foreign cultures on our own, realizing that a few air hours today make the most distant land our neighbor, and seeing the importance of understanding other peoples by knowing their languages.

This is the first in a series of three articles dealing with several phases of language teaching in the high school, specifically: language week, the language club, and the fostering of an assembly program. The participants in the consideration of the matter were members of the Workshop on Resources in the Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages, conducted by Dr. James B. Tharp, on the Ohio State University campus during the summer of 1950.

## MODERN LANGUAGE WEEK

**I. School:** A. Display in: 1. Library, 2. Halls, 3. Art gallery, 4. Posters in rooms and corridors. (This display will include articles brought from foreign countries, as well as realia from bureaus from New York and Washington.) B. Assembly programs: 1. Films, 2. Talent within the school, 3. Outside speakers: a. Prominent citizens, b. Foreign born, 4. Local talent: a. Singers, b. Dancers, c. Travelers. (These assemblies would take advantage of all the resources of the district. In the case of smaller schools, this talent could be imported.) C. Other possibilities: 1. Radio programs, 2. Ingenious use of foreign correspondence, 3. Visiting day, or evening, 4. Poster contest with prizes, 5. Movies, 6. Speaker's bureau for the community, 7. P.T.A., 8. Materials and high school pupils made readily available to elementary schools. (This unit is very important, since it is a pleasant form of propaganda and makes for friendly relations with the community.)

**II. Other schools:** A. Elementary, B. Private, C. Parochial.

**III. Other language groups:** A. Greek, B. Italian, C. Slavonic languages.

**IV. Religious groups:** A. Churches of all denominations. (If the pupils in the school could carry the word to their individual churches, this would reach the great majority. It would have the advantage of personal contact and would lessen work.)

**V. Public officials:** A. Governor, B. Mayor, C. Chamber of Commerce.

**VI. Publicity:** A. Newspapers, B. Radio, C. Parade, D. Banners on the streets, E. Flags of foreign countries prominently displayed, F. Dancing on the courthouse square: 1. Community dancing, 2. Groups in costume, G. Carnival.

**VII. Men's service groups:** A. Luncheon clubs: 1. Kiwanis, 2. Lions, 3. Optimist, 4. Rotary. B. Fraternal organizations: 1. Eagles, 2. Elks, 3. Knights of Columbus, 4. Masons, 5. Moose.

VIII. Veteran's organizations: A. American Legion, B. Veterans of Foreign Wars.

IX. Red Cross.

X. Salvation Army.

XI. Volunteers of America.

XII. Women's clubs: A. D.A.R., B. Daughters of Veterans, C. A.A.U.W., D. Professional organizations: 1. Delta Kappa Gamma, 2. Pi Lambda Theta, E. Business and Professional Women's Club, F. Zonta, G. Quota, H. Garden Clubs, I. Federated women's clubs, J. League of Women Voters, K. Mothers' clubs of fraternities, L. Political groups, M. Scholarship clubs, N. Other local groups.

XIII. Youth groups: A. Boy Scouts, B. Girl Scouts, C. "Y" groups, D. 4 H clubs, E. Camp-fire girls.

XIV. Other community and cultural organizations: A. Art galleries, B. Camera clubs, C. Libraries, D. Museums.

XV. Business houses: A. Antique shops, B. Beauty salons, C. Dance studios, D. Department stores, E. Dress and fur shops, F. Furniture stores, G. Gift shops, H. Groceries, I. Music shops, J. Pharmacies, K. Restaurants, L. Travel agencies.

We realize that the foreign language family cannot do the task alone. If it is hoped that the

foregoing suggestions have designated various community groups whose help may be procured in a venture which can be interesting, stimulating, and worth-while. We have attempted to outline procedures for a language week with a greatly extended scope, reaching beyond the school yard, out into the business districts, cultural centers, clubs, and homes of the community. The outline, while practical, is necessarily incomplete and will not fit the needs of every individual community. It will, however, serve as a point of departure for those who are convinced of the importance of this aspect of their work and have the courage of their convictions.

May we suggest that some time in February seems to this committee the most ideal time of year for such a week.

CORNELIA BURGE

*Duncan U. Fletcher High School*

*Jacksonville Beach, Florida*

LEONA GLENN

*West High School*

*Columbus, Ohio*

ETHEL LAVELLE

*North High School*

*Columbus, Ohio*

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## *The Problem of Attracting Students to Language Study*

THE need for arousing in our secondary school population greater interest in the study of modern languages is generally accepted by world-minded citizens. How to teach modern languages effectively, once we have the willing students, is also a well-recognized problem, but one with which this article is not concerned.

For several years the language department of our school has given considerable thought to the first of the problems above—and, of course, to the second also. We have been giving special thought to the problem of finding material for assembly programs to be presented to the students of our junior high school toward the goal of interesting them in the study of languages, particularly French, German, and Spanish. (Latin is offered in the final year of our junior high school, with two years of additional study possible in the high school. (Modern languages are offered only in the high school.)

Unless we have been blind in our search, little material seems to have been developed for programs of the type we have wanted to present. It would not be difficult to find statistics, quotations from well-known thinkers, and arguments by language specialists all adding up to convincing reasons, *to adults*, for studying modern languages. But would our young listeners give heed? The approach, as we have seen it, should be indirect; it should be entertaining as well as informative if we are to hope for good attention and subsequent desirable action.

Also we have felt that our approach should not be competitive, with each branch of the department marshalling all the arguments of special pleaders for taking one language as opposed to another. Much of the material of this type is not only overlapping in claims, but definitely misleading. The end result would be confusion rather than light. Furthermore we in the department are not interested in robbing prospective students from one another,

but, rather, in stimulating good will, good thinking, and good action in the direction of language study in general.

As has been stated, material for the type of program we have had in mind is scanty, if any exists at all. So we have had to experiment, hoping to create a satisfactory approach to the problem of interesting more young people in more study of modern languages. (We have not overlooked values in the study of Latin, but since our audiences have already made decisions in respect to the study of Latin, we have been especially interested in directing their attention toward modern languages.)

For three years now we have been presenting these experimental programs, one each year, before junior high school assemblies. After each program pupils in the audience have been polled for their reactions. In general, it is possible to say that we have succeeded in stimulating hoped for reactions.

That is, students in our audiences have gained the notions that language study can be useful and that language study can be fun. Many have said that they have been led to a kind of self-identification with a particular language—an important outcome we have hoped for, but which, as has been stated, we have not wished to achieve by means of competitive conflicting and misleading propaganda.

Actually, we do not know in any accurate sense what effect all this has had on our high school enrollment in modern languages. However, we are certain that we have achieved good will, good will among faculty as well as students.

Furthermore, these programs have been of no little value to the participating students. Language students, unlike athletes and musicians, have little opportunity to gain the sense of achievement and other self-satisfactions that come from showing off special talents.

Readers of the MLJ, perhaps would like details of the programs the language depart-



ment of our school has staged in assemblies of our junior high school. Certainly, we in our department would be interested in details of what has been attempted elsewhere toward the goal of interesting more young people in more study of modern languages.

Except for a film used one year, our programs have been built entirely around student talent. No teacher or other adult makes a speech. In fact, no student makes a real speech. The student master of ceremonies usually makes a statement to the effect that the program will not attempt to tell an individual student what language he should study in high school. That, the M.C. explains, is a matter to be worked out between the individual student and his counsellor, who will advise according to the special inclinations and future plans of the student. (To aid counsellors in this work the language department has prepared a question-answer type of guide on the subjects of who should study a language, which language, and for how long should it be studied. Incidentally, it could be stated here that a fine cooperative relationship exists between the language and guidance departments. The director of guidance in the junior high school has been especially enthusiastic about the value and the success of our assembly programs.) Now to return to the student M.C., he does give the general advice that those planning to study a language in the high school should plan to do so for three years.

Our first assembly program for the purpose mentioned was in three parts. First, there was a panel discussion or interview involving two junior high students and one senior high student, the latter having taken three years of Latin and three years of Spanish. The questions and answers—exchanged between one who was passing through the language mill and two who were about to—were organized in advance and rehearsed in the interest of smooth delivery and consistency with actual school policy. Secondly, a brief anecdote was dramatized. The same anecdote was presented first in French, then in German, in Spanish, and finally dramatized in English. Explained in English, the point of the anecdote would not make a hyena laugh. But young people like to hear foreign languages spoken. Moreover, they en-

joy hearing them spoken, apparently as spoken by natives, by other students. They wish that they could do likewise. Finally, on this first program, was shown a Coronet one-reel film called "Why Study Languages."

The second year no attention at all was given to Latin. (Some of the questions in the panel discussion of the first year applied to the study of Latin.) The second program was built around the idea used the previous year, that of presenting the same or similar material in each of four modern languages, including English, in this case British English. These skits cannot be long, naturally, and they must make use of obvious cognates, and of exaggerated gestures. When reduced to simple American English, it is quite possible that they seem to have little point and very little humor. But as given they have been well received by difficult audiences, who have reacted in the favorable ways mentioned above. The skit of the second year capitalized on the then current interest in the song craze "The Thing." The setting was the lobby of a building of the United Nations. French, German, Spanish, and British speaking representatives inquired about routine matters of an information clerk, who replied in the language spoken to her. One wanted postage stamps, another to be directed to a phone booth, another to the cafeteria. Then, in turn, all returned to ask the clerk for suggestions as to a souvenir of America to take back home to the wife. In each case the clerk recommended "The Thing." As a finale, each returned to the stage to tell in song, to the tune of "The Thing" and in his particular language, what he had bought, "The Thing."

The third program—which, according to those who had seen all three, was the best—gave the skit idea a new twist. This time what was done by each language group was completely different, and little was explained in English. English, of course, was the language used by the Latin group who presented a mock trial that attempted to point up in humorous fashion principal reasons for studying Latin. And there was mimeographed and distributed to the audience a list of English equivalents for principal non-cognates to be heard in the French, German, and Spanish skits. For their skit the French group presented a Gallic version

of an American radio or television quiz program. (A few words of English did creep into this skit since one of the contestants was an American in Paris.) A group of German students, all members of the school German club, presented in brief a typical club meeting, held, as is really the case, in the home of a member. A narrator standing to one side of the stage gave a running explanation in English of what was being said and done. Spanish students presented a frontier incident. The principal and obvious business concerned two American tourists, one a young man, the other an attractive young lady, passing through Mexican customs.

Our next program, not fully developed at this writing, will probably envision international television. In turn, programs will be

tuned in from French, German, and Spanish speaking countries. Also we plan to use a film, another Coronet one-reel film, called "Why Study Latin." For the following year we plan to imagine humorous situations in which service men find a knowledge of French, German, and Spanish to be useful. What we shall do farther in the future may be influenced, we hope, by ideas contributed by readers of this article. Although we could, of course, repeat ideas used in the past, we prefer to find in our own minds and from suggestions of others in the field new and better ways to approach what, to us who believe in language study, is an extremely real problem.

ALFRED L. LUPIEN

*Nulley High School  
Nulley, New Jersey*

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#### ANNOUNCEMENT

The AATF and the AATSP invite all teachers of foreign languages to a social gathering at the Hotel Sheraton Plaza in Copley Square, Boston, on December 29, from 5:00 to 7:00 P.M.

This is a purely social party, with no speeches. There will be cocktails and other beverages, including fruit juices and soft drinks. There is no fixed charge; each person will pay for what he or she orders, and there is no obligation to order anything at all.

Obviously the ladies are invited as well as the men, and the two Associations hope that every foreign-language teacher in or near Boston on December 29 will save the end of the afternoon for this gathering. Come and bring your friends; or come and see your friends; they will all be there!

# The Editor's Corner

## Language Study and the World Affairs\*

United States Commissioner of Education, Earl J. McGrath, prefaced his Address before the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association in St. Louis, May 3, with the following statement:

"Group of language teachers, I have two confessions to make. First, I think this is the first time in my life that I have forced my way into a program. I asked to speak on this program in spite of the fact that, as your Chairman said, I have had about 1500 invitations to speak in the last three years and naturally could accept very few of those invitations. However, I had a compulsion on this subject.

"In the past three years I have traveled in 19 countries; I have frequently been embarrassed by my own inability and the inability of my countrymen to use and understand other languages. And, so, I wanted to say something to the school men and women of America on this subject. I am under no illusion that this will change the situation over night. What I am going to say to you will be no new story to you; but, I am hopeful that in some quarters it may have some small effect.

"The other confession I want to make is that, as some of you know, for most of my professional life I have been interested in the subject of general education and the college curriculum, and for some years unwisely took the position that a foreign language did not constitute an indispensable element in a general educational program. This position, I am happy to say, I have reversed. I have now seen the light and I consider the foreign language a very important element in general education. I am not saying that here because you are language teachers; I have said it in some quarters where it is not as popular as with you."

We have to recognize immediately that our Commissioner of Education is a noble and courageous man. Here is a man, a specialist in education, a man of wide interests, who during a

period of his eventful life had a point of view which was to a large extent in consonance with the opinions of other educators who were opposed to the teaching of foreign languages, and slowly, as the result of unusual opportunities and experiences which come to few men, "saw the light." And, it is quite clear that *seeing the light*, in this case, means recognizing that he had been mistaken, that his colleagues were mistaken, and he had come to a conclusion which was a firm conviction of what is best for us in these United States in our relations with the other communities of the World of which we are an integral part.

Fate coupled with a will to make use of all our advantages have placed this country in a position of leadership, which we all recognize, but which we seem hesitant in assuming, not because of any habit of shirking before duty, but because the spirit of isolation is still strong among a certain element of our older generation and those trained under them.

Our Commissioner certainly is not an isolationist. As a man who has a mission to fulfill he announces publicly that he has reversed his former position, and he announced it where he knew he was being heard. He was not keeping it a secret, he wanted to make it clear that it was more than mere words, and he wanted action because the matter called for action.

The task is not an easy one. A source of weakness on our part springs from the fact that we are divided, or rather we are not united. Even when at the call of a great leader, as our Commissioner, we should be getting shoulder to shoulder and contribute for our task the best there is in everyone of us, it will be hard to unite our efforts. Our first impression, because anything coming out of Washington

\* Published in the May number of the *Modern Language Journal*.

sounds like a call to dinner, will be to think that now the battle is won, the enemy in retreat, and all we have to do is to join the victorious parade. And some will come out with bright ideas which they had twenty or thirty years ago, which they still think of as new ideas, and which have no more chance of attaining success than they did twenty or thirty years ago. While it should not be very difficult to detect these ideas, it will be found they can not be passed over lightly. Some of their exponents bear names that frequently come to the fore regardless of the nature of the problem, and they will either shape our course of action or there will be mumbling on the sidelines, and there will be some hesitant souls unable to decide which way to go. The matter has to be handled with one aim in view, that we should attain success in our undertaking and that our success rest on a firm and solid basis.

We hope the issues are clear now. Because of the position of leadership in the Western World won by this country, we have to make every effort to shape this nation into an intelligent leader and this we can not do unless we understand the other peoples as well as possible and convince them that we are really interested in them, and one of the successful and effective ways in which this can be done is by being ready to communicate with them in their own language or some other language in addition to our own, as those of them who have had educational advantages are able to do. We should also familiarize ourselves with the various phases of their cultures, which will give us an insight into their hopes and ambitions, and we will know how to approach them better, and they will learn that we are not self-satisfied isolationists.

These are not thoughts that have come to us now on the spur of the moment. Our editorials in the *Journal* during 1950 are a clear indication that our interest is not casual—how could it?—**We are calling again for a united front.** We have the MLA ready, under capable leadership, to lead cooperatively a campaign for the teaching of foreign languages; the NFMLTA has worked consistently toward the betterment of foreign language teaching; and we now have a Commissioner of Education who understands his position of national

leadership, and who has a clear vision of the position of the United States in the world's affairs—the enormous responsibility that has fallen to this country. Every step must be taken that will lead to peace and good understanding among the nations of the World.

**Let us think big thoughts.**

JdT.

DEAR EDITOR:

I have been reading over again Commissioner McGrath's recent and timely statement on "Language Study and World Affairs," and I find it a very manifesto, which, as you yourself have noted, can be "of tremendous help to the teaching of foreign languages in the United States."

It is a good thing always to have constituted authority on your side, especially in an undertaking a project not yet universally popular. I remember how in 1917 I yearned, and of course in vain at that time, for a show of interest, even ever so slight, on the part of the United States Navy with respect to my own great interest in studying Russian. So I say it is good to have authority on your side, and, since Dr. McGrath is "authority" with a capital A in the educational field, we welcome his avowed partisanship of the study of foreign languages. We hail with approval and enthusiasm, moreover, his support of language study in the elementary grades. It is a cause Mrs. Coleman and I have promoted determinedly for a long time, not only through articles in the *AATSEEL Bulletin*, during the five years (1943-48) of our editorship of this journal, but in public lectures and conversations.

Still, the winning of a Commissioner of Education to our side does not get us far in the struggle for more and better language study, at an earlier age, which is our present crusade, as Dr. McGrath will be, I am sure, the first to admit. One has but to recall the Commissioner's own startled surprise,—which he confessed to us recently at a conference in Washington,—his surprise over the stir which his statement on Language Study has aroused in the brief period since its issuance in print. Declarations of policy or statements of principle by a Commissioner of Education generally come out pure duds. They have to be made as



routine duty, but nearly always they fall, as the proverbial seed, on fallow ground, and produce nothing.

Why is it, then, that Dr. McGrath's call for more and better language study, at an earlier age, has enjoyed a fate uncommon to the run-of-the-mill official statement? Why has it created the stir of which I have spoken?

My own explanation is its timeliness. We are beginning at last, I feel, to be ashamed, as a nation, of our dumbness, ashamed, yes, and a little frightened, at our inability to communicate with the world in any language but our own. We are beginning to have intimations, vague ones still and small, but intimations, nevertheless, that the traditional "Let 'em learn English!" attitude of our people will work for us in our new role as a world power about as satisfactorily as the "Let 'em eat cake!" attitude worked in 1793 for the Bourbons. Dr. McGrath refers to this attitude specifically. He knows, as we language teachers have long known, that this attitude is simply not going to work at all in the world that is crystallizing around us. There can be, especially for a great power such as we have been driven to become, no such concept as "lesser breeds without the law." There are no peoples, no cultures, no languages, whom we can afford, as a world power, to insult, by thinking of them in terms of Kipling's outrageous slogan.

And so, languages we must learn, if only because we are great and strong, for it is from the strong that magnanimity is expected, and from the great that the initial gesture of sympathy, understanding, and interest is expected.

Thus, with Dr. McGrath's proposition we are in hearty agreement. When, however, it comes to implementing his program, when it comes actually to putting into operation an effective course of language study, beginning in the lower grades, we are going to come, I fear, into a head-on clash with a basic prejudice of our American people. This prejudice is the fear of being different, or odd, or unusual.

No one expects, least of all Commissioner McGrath himself, "that every child in every elementary school in every American community be required to begin the study of a foreign language." Only a few will either be qualified for such a program, or, in view of the

present teacher shortage, be able to be served by it. Thus the language students in the elementary grades, for the present at least and in the foreseeable future, will be just a small group, singled out from the mass. Inevitably, since they will in the main be the more alert students, they will be labelled "smarties," or "snobs," at least "different."

But, as I observe our American elementary school children, the one thing they fear, the thing they cringe from above all others, is this very "being different." All over this country I see children of Russian and Polish, Slovak and the other Slavic origins, renouncing their priceless heritage of the spoken word in these languages because to speak or understand them would label them as "different."

The language students in a public school offering a program such as Commissioner McGrath regards as desirable would, I predict, at once constitute an elite, and if there is one thing hated above all things else in this country, it is an elite.

Here will be a fundamental hurdle for the promoters of language study in the grades. Desirable, desperately desirable such early beginning of study in the language field is, but, will the children who are selected for such instruction, or who take it of their own free will, be strong enough to hold out against the taunts of their fellows? Will they have the courage to be different?

Of course we know that if a democracy like our own is to survive, we can not permanently go on the way, as I have indicated, we are headed: in the direction of one hundred per cent adherence to a single mediocre pattern. The present tide, with the masses of our elementary and high school students striving only to be as nearly all alike as possible, must turn. A few must be found who are willing to be different, and it may be the language students who will be the pioneers in this greatly to be desired tide-turning. A few dynamic teachers of higher intellectual calibre and superior energy and training to the average elementary teacher, can help mightily in making this come to pass.

And so, let us hope that before long we may see it become the "smart" thing, to be studying languages in the grades. Then and then only,

when language study goes hand in hand with the other basic studies such as mathematics and one's native language, will you breed a race of Americans no longer dumb in the presence of their friends and associates from other countries. It is an end greatly to be desired and one worthy of our best efforts to bring to reality.

The National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations is immeasurably grateful to Commissioner McGrath for his epoch-making statement on "Language Study and World Affairs." We are proud indeed that he delivered this stimulating address before one of our own federations, the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association.

It is a pleasure to repeat here in our official *Journal* what I recently told Commissioner McGrath in Washington. Not only will the action recommended by the Commissioner benefit American teachers of modern languages but it will actually contribute to the solving of the present East-West impasse.

ARTHUR P. COLEMAN  
President, National  
Federation of Modern  
Language Teachers  
Associations

President of Alliance  
College

July 29, 1952

DEAR EDITOR:

Commissioner McGrath's address in St. Louis is notable not only because of the educational eminence of its author but also because it is a clear and eloquent statement of the urgent need for more widespread and more extended study of foreign languages by the youth of America, upon whom destiny has placed an increasing responsibility for the sanity and peace of the world. Our students can not fulfill this responsibility without a closer understanding of and sympathy with the people of other nations, which can not be achieved on a monolingual basis.

It is especially gratifying that Commissioner McGrath was not content to make a speech, however noble and notable, and let the matter rest there. Shortly after his speech, a group of leaders in foreign-language instruction in the

elementary schools met at his invitation in Washington to discuss means of putting into effect the ideal of extended instruction at the elementary-school level for every American child capable and desirous of studying a foreign language.

The Rockefeller Foundation grant of \$120,000 to the Modern Language Association to conduct a three-year campaign to strengthen the position of foreign-language study in the United States will mean another major advance in the national awareness of the need for international communication.

The AATSP joins the MLA and the other Modern Language Teachers Associations in enthusiastic support of Commissioner McGrath and of all that his leadership gives promise of accomplishing in the future.

DONALD DEVENISH WALSH  
Editor of *Hispania*

*The Choate School*

DEAR EDITOR:

It seems to me that one of the basic problems which the teaching of modern languages faces at the present time lies in the paradoxical and absurd situation in which they find themselves before the general public. On one hand, all the forward looking agencies which are interested in the national welfare and in the proper discharge of our international commitments are proclaiming the need, even the desperate shortage, of trained linguists in this country. They point to the many instances in which American prestige has greatly suffered and in which we have failed to accomplish what we should in international relations because we can not speak and understand the languages of other peoples. On the other hand, in educational circles, particularly in secondary schools, a mistaken philosophy of education and an outmoded attitude toward the present day world has persuaded school principals and superintendents, school boards, committees on curriculum revision, and guidance experts, that no one should be required to study foreign languages and even that there is neither any practical advantage nor any disciplinary gain in the study of them.

At this point, the address of Commissioner McGrath comes as an authoritative pro-

nouncement amid the confusion. Here is an educator who commands the respect of his colleagues, and who at the same time speaks with authority for the public welfare. Let us hope that his words will be widely heard and acted upon.

STEPHEN A. FREEMAN  
Director of the Language Schools  
Middlebury College.

DEAR EDITOR:

Those of us who are concerned with or about the education of the youth of our country, be they in the profession of teaching or in any other walk of life, owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Earl J. McGrath, our Commissioner of Education, for his admirable manifesto delivered at the thirty-fifth annual meeting of the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association on May 3, at St. Louis, Missouri.<sup>1</sup>

In unmistakable terms, Dr. McGrath sets forth the reasons for an earlier and wider foreign language study in our schools: "The United States is, whether we like it or not, in a position of world leadership. If it is to discharge its obligations wisely and well, our citizens must understand other peoples and cultures. To gain such understanding many Americans must command a knowledge of one or more foreign languages. If they are to acquire these language skills, our school system must provide opportunity beginning in the early grades for many children to study other tongues. It is in the national interest for members of the profession and laymen to unite their energies in an effort to increase the study of foreign languages. In doing this I firmly believe they will be making a vital contribution to the well-being of our people, to our national prosperity, and to international understanding and peace."

Dr. McGrath points out that a number of institutions in various regions of our country have begun to offer foreign languages in the lower grades of our public schools. He mentions San Diego, Los Angeles, Seattle, St. Louis, several places in Texas, and the District of Columbia. To be sure, these beginnings are timid and limited in scope, but even so they are significantly encouraging because of the

gratifying results that have been and are being obtained.

In terms of our nation's urgent need for knowledge of foreign tongues by a much greater number of our citizens who can deny the soundness of the Commissioner's proposal? His arguments are incontrovertible. Many other countries have their school systems geared to a multiplicity of languages to be taught beginning at an early age, so why can't it be done here?

It could and should be done notwithstanding the lamentations of many school administrators who just dread the thought that their curricula will need a radical overhauling in order to make room for subjects which some opponents to teaching foreign languages on lower than college levels would relegate to peripheral or marginal status in order to make ample elbow-room for what they fondly designate as the "core-subjects"—English, General Science, Social Science, General Mathematics, etc. The demands of enlightened and well-organized parent-teacher groups, however, can overcome any opposition.

Parallel with the reorganization of the upper (5th, 6th, 7th and 8th) grade and High School curricula, should go the reorganization of courses specifically designed for prospective teachers of foreign languages in our public schools. It does not matter whether such specific courses are offered exclusively by Teachers Colleges or by Liberal Arts Colleges as well. The latter may not find it desirable to include courses for teachers below secondary school level. What matters is that *all* teachers courses should be conducted in the foreign language. Students unable to participate should not be admitted to them. One of the courses should deal with the cultural development of the foreign people, i.e. their art (painting, sculpture, music), their science and their social and political ideology. In Literature courses, a more thorough study of a few great writers would be preferable to the so-called Surveys. Since all courses would be conducted in the foreign language, there would be no need to offer time-wasting and usually boring courses in conversation and composition.

The Methods Course (conducted by a mem-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. May issue of *Modern Language Journal*; June issue of *School and Society* and August issue of *Hispania*.

ber of the foreign language department) should include the reading and appraisal of texts usable in the grades and in the High School, i.e. works by foreign authors suitable to High School students.

For both grade and High School teaching it is very desirable that the teacher be able to lead in singing of foreign language songs. The ability to play accompaniment on any instrument is even a greater asset. Hence all prospective teachers should be urged to acquire that skill.

Opportunities for Observation and Practice Teaching are, of course, a *sine qua non* requirement. At least one full semester should be allotted to this phase of the prospective teacher's professional training.

Some seven decades ago, Wilhelm Victor in Germany began a crusade against the grammar-translation method of teaching modern foreign languages (*Quousque tandem!*). The outcome was discarding the classical inheritance and substituting an aural-oral approach. Similarly Dr. McGrath urges us today to return to normalcy so-to-speak and make our technique more "functional." Beginning in the fourth, fifth, or sixth grade, according to his plan, our pupils would be able to acquire good pronunciation and speaking knowledge within the most frequent useful everyday words plus the vocabulary contained in simple stories of the graded Readers and enter the High School well prepared for more advanced reading and study of grammar essentials of the foreign tongue—a complete reversal of our present practice.

In brief, to make language study more functional we need:

- a) First and foremost, adequately trained teachers (American born preferred)
- b) For the pupils in the grades, interesting, well graded series of Readers suitable to the ages of the pupils.
- c) Illustrative material of all sorts (projectors, films, slides, charts, pictures, maps, etc.) to enliven our instruction and to impart to our youth knowledge of the foreign countries, the foreign peoples, and their civilizations.

The recommendations of the Modern For-

eign Language Study as to "adequacy" are quite explicit.<sup>2</sup> They are as valid today as at the time of their birth a quarter of a century ago. To what extent they have influenced Teacher Training of the recently completed nation-wide Survey of the academic preparation and professional training of modern foreign language teachers are tabulated and analyzed. That job will be done when some fairy grandmother provides the means to implement the labor of such an analysis. For the time being the material reposes on my shelves.

Returning to Dr. McGrath's proposal, I venture to say that under his leadership and continuous interest in the matter and with the collaboration of the Modern Language Association of America and the National Federation of Modern Foreign Language Associations as well as that of the leading educators in our country the consummation of the proposed reorganization of modern foreign language teaching and learning can be achieved within not too many years. *Que vivra verrea.*

C. M. PURLIN

General Chairman of the Federation's  
Committee on Recruitment, Train-  
ing, and Placement of Modern  
Foreign Language Teachers.

DEAR EDITOR:

In his St. Louis speech Dr. Earl J. McGrath, U. S. Commissioner of Education, made a convincing case for beginning the learning of a second language at an early age. To those teachers and others who advocate the learning of modern foreign languages at the elementary-school level it is indeed gratifying to know that the Commissioner believes that many pupils should have an opportunity to start to acquire practical facility in a second language as early as the fourth, fifth or sixth grade. A very good case can also be made, no doubt, for an even earlier beginning wherever possible, since it takes a long time under average conditions

<sup>2</sup> Cf. C. M. Purlin: "The Training of Teachers of the Modern Foreign Languages." Prepared for the *Modern Foreign Language Study*. The McMillan Company, New York, 1929. pp. 95-97.

Cf. also Stephen A. Freeman: "What About the Teacher?" *Modern Language Journal*, April 1949, pp. 255-267.



for a child to acquire a command of a second language at all commensurate with his command of his native tongue.

The Commissioner is careful to point out that he is not advocating that all elementary schools should attempt immediately, or indeed at any time, to teach a second language or that *every* pupil be required to study a foreign language at any age. He realized that such an effort would be neither wise nor possible. He does believe quite justifiably that much more than is now being done can be done at once in many places to give hundreds of thousands of American children an opportunity to start the learning of a modern foreign language at an early age. He answers very adequately the usual argument against such a procedure. It is the same argument, of course, which has been offered in opposition to previous efforts to enrich the offerings for elementary-school children. Experience has shown that time can always be found for worthwhile activities in the schools.

In his "single lapse into pedagogy" the Commissioner is equally sound in his suggestions. He believes that language study should be made more functional at all levels, that the spoken language should be emphasized, and that language study must be related to other aspects of the cultures of the peoples whose languages are studied, since understanding among peoples is the principal objective he now has in mind. Certainly at the elementary-school level the study of any language must be definitely functional if it is to be at all successful. A method involving the aural-oral approach must be employed. The language must live if the required motivation is to be provided, to say nothing about the desired results. Opportunities for fruitful integration with areas of experience already established in the curriculum and involving foreign cultures are indeed numerous at all school levels and especially in the elementary schools.

In his plea for a better program of foreign language learning in our schools the Commissioner does not fail to stress the desirability of providing a continuity of experience from the elementary school through college. Needless to say, the language situation in our schools would be improved tremendously if a consider-

able number of pupils could enter high school already equipped with a practical command of a second language. By the same token, language study at the college level could achieve outcomes generally impossible at the present time.

Dr. McGrath is definitely on the right track. Surely, his plea for more and better language instruction in American schools will produce worthwhile results.

STEPHEN L. PITCHER  
St. Louis Public Schools

July 28, 1952

Professor Julio del Toro, Editor  
"Modern Language Journal"  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Dear Professor del Toro:

In view of the constant attacks upon the teaching of foreign languages and the depreciation of this area of study by school administrators, it is extremely heartening to find no less a person than the U. S. Commissioner of Education making strong public pronouncements in favor of an extension of language instruction in this country.

Dr. McGrath is to be congratulated by all teachers of foreign languages for the service he has rendered them. There is absolutely no doubt that they will give him their hearty support in carrying out the ideas he has expressed. His friendly attitude alone has given them encouragement and has strengthened their morale.

On the other hand, all educators and educational administrators, whether they are aware of it or not, owe him a debt of gratitude for pointing to a grave lack in the educational system of a country which is destined to be the cultural as well as the political and economic leader of the Western World.

Sincerely yours,  
THEODORE HUEBENER

Director of Foreign Languages  
in the schools of the City of  
New York

DEAR EDITOR:

We have all been profoundly encouraged by the historic speech of Commissioner McGrath which was delivered in St. Louis last May

3 and reproduced in the May issue of *Modern Language Journal*. It is the most heartening thing that has happened to us in a good many years. Now it is up to us, the language teachers, to help to implement his proposal.

1. *Publicity*. We must publicize the speech as much as possible. We should obtain reprints of it from the Commissioner and send them to newspaper editors, school administrators, Parent Teachers Associations, clergymen, business men's clubs, and so on. We should, ourselves, volunteer to speak before any groups that will listen to us. Every little bit helps, no matter how modest our bit may be. But speeches are not enough.

Our best publicity agents are the children themselves. They love to perform in public, their proud parents are glad to have them do so, and the public welcomes the novelty and freshness of children acting, speaking, and singing in a foreign language. Such was our experience at Purdue University last year when one of our Spanish instructors, Mr. Leonard Shae-witz, had his sixth graders performing regularly and spontaneously three times a week over the Purdue station WBAA. (See *Hispania*, May 1952, page 219.) The climax to the year's activities was a television performance broadcast by an Indianapolis station. I have heard of similar broadcasts elsewhere.

It would be helpful to our cause if a considerable number of radio and TV performances could be arranged all over the country by teachers who are already giving instruction in foreign languages at the elementary school level. Free time on radio and TV programs can be found. Arrangements can be made. If they are made sufficiently in advance and if adequate publicity precedes the performances, the audience will be numbered in the thousands. Such publicity can create the demand for foreign language instruction that you and I alone can never create.

2. *We need teachers*. Most of us who teach at the college or high school level would quail (or should quail) at the thought of teaching ten-year-olds. We need the services of teachers who are already experienced and successful in dealing with little children. How can the appropriate ones be "converted" into foreign language teachers? Here again, it seems to me,

we must depend upon the few who are already successfully teaching languages in the grades.

I suggest that these few be properly paid to conduct regional summer workshops in college or community centers. The old principle of "Each one teach one" is far too slow for our present purposes. Each one must teach fifteen or twenty every summer until an adequate number of teachers is attained. Colleges must offer their facilities to such workshop leaders, and Boards of Education must be induced to grant appropriate promotion points to teachers who attend them. Such problems can be overcome if the public demands it.

3. *Materials*. Some new materials have already been devised, but there is a need of more. Especially needed are the audio-visual materials which are beyond the resources of individual teachers in most situations. And it would be a tragedy if the new movement were discredited by reliance upon formal academic materials, meaning text books.

The big city school systems with their audio-visual resources can come to the rescue here. They can produce and make freely available the new materials which are needed for the new venture.

With publicity, teachers, and materials, we shall not have all that we need, but we shall have enough to make a good start.

ELTON HOCKING

Head of the Department of  
Modern Languages  
Purdue University

July 29, 1952

DEAR EDITOR:

Dr. Earl McGrath in his address *Language Study and World Affairs*, is to be commended, not only for the excellence of his presentation and the sincerity of his purpose, but also for the realistic and direct approach that he used to the discussion of a problem familiar to the friends of foreign language study. He avoids the old arguments, valid though they may be, and approaches the problem from a point of view that places great stress on the immediate and practical need that our country feels in this one world situation.

His description of America's need can be clearly understood by the layman, teacher,

counselor, and administrator. This new place for foreign language instruction in the curriculum can be recognized by all as an indisputable fact, and can form the basis or core for parent-teacher-counselor-administrator planning. Working together they can make room for the extension of foreign language education in the school program.

Another feature of Dr. McGrath's presentation is the fact that his proposals and suggestions are reasonable. He is no extremist demanding a complete revision of the curriculum with every pupil regimented into foreign language classes. He wins friends and converts from administrators, teachers, and parents alike by his understanding of local school facilities and the problems involved in setting a more extensive foreign language program in operation. His encouragement to introduce foreign language study whenever and wherever possible, extending it as facilities and the availability of trained personnel permit, will do much to win over a public sympathetic to our cause. Who can deny McGrath's most reasonable request? He says:

I am not proposing that *every* child in *every* elementary school in *every* American community be required to begin the study of a foreign language. I am suggesting that as many American children as possible be given the opportunity to do so, and I believe that with a little ingenuity and determination this opportunity could be extended to hundreds of thousands.

As foreign language teachers, appreciative of the value of foreign language study and aware of the important implications of Dr. McGrath's statements, we should be most encouraged by such active support on the part of the United States Commissioner of Education. Our task is now to rally our forces, to push our campaign in the direction laid out by Dr. McGrath, and to affirm most sincerely our belief in meeting our country's needs as he describes them. Putting the needs of the country, and the needs of the individual child always before us we cannot fail in our worthy purpose—and all that we ever hoped for in the revival and extension of foreign language study will be realized for us.

CLARENCE W. WACHNER  
Detroit Public Schools  
Wayne University

DEAR EDITOR:

Doctor McGrath's address at the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association meeting in St. Louis, May 3, 1952, was not just another address. It was an event of the utmost significance in the history of the teaching of modern foreign languages in the United States and, let us hope, in the history of our nation's effort to unite the world in one way of life.

*For the first time on record a front-line government official, entrusted with the responsibility of guiding educational policy on a national scale has related the work of the modern foreign language teacher "to the well-being of our people, to national prosperity and to international understanding and peace."*

Those who heard the Commissioner's address were aware from the first that they were present at a special occasion, for Dr. McGrath prefaced his message by saying that it was the first time he had ever asked to address a particular group of persons. The reasons for his unprecedented action are clearly evident in the message itself, which it behooves each of us to read carefully and take to heart.

Dr. McGrath's support of a movement to work toward the institution of modern foreign language instruction in the elementary school cannot fail to obtain our unanimous approval. It should also enlist our active cooperation and stimulate our individual initiative. But the Commissioner reminds us that pending the results of such a long-range program, the immediate problem is how to revitalize the teaching of foreign languages in high school and college, where we still have a foot in the door. Dr. McGrath points out that our troubles are of our own making. Let us be realistic. We *are* in trouble. We are being pushed around in many places and in many we have been pushed out.

The cause of our trouble is quite simple. What we have to offer, by and large, does not fulfill a need. We are unable to convince people that studying a foreign language is the same as learning a foreign language. In short, we have been wasting people's time and money and perhaps often boring them to boot.

The evidence of our failure is today present in many a classroom. More striking, however,

it is present in persons now in positions of responsibility who need a practical all-around command of one or two foreign languages but who were taught only to read. Some of them are our colleagues and our administrators, answerable to boards of trustees for educational policy and the wise disbursement of funds. When they look to see if we have changed, they remain persuaded, more often than not, that the privileged position of our subjects as a requirement is relatively less deserved than new subjects which have come into the curriculum. Not, of course, that it should be this way.

The fact that there are mitigating circumstances does not relieve us of our responsibility. Our own will to be useful members of society rather than ornaments has not been strong enough. Our emergence from our ivory towers has been so infrequent that we have returned into them frightened and uncomprehending. When criticized we have pleaded large classes, too little time with students, and low I.Q.'s. Not ours, the students!

We have, of course, improved. But our progress has been too slow, too deliberate, measurable by teacher-generation rather than by student-generation, while the means of communication and means of destruction are changing practically overnight. Two thousand educational TV stations, for example, are authorized and expected to be in operation by 1955. What are we preparing to do about it?

Dr. McGrath proposes the creation of a deliberative body composed not only of language teachers but also of representatives from other fields, such as history, sociology, anthropology, education, psychology and government officials, who have a vital interest in the recruitment of linguistically and culturally competent personnel. No statement could indicate more clearly the wide potential usefulness of our subjects. Such a body would consider the "status of foreign language study in our entire educational system". It is implicit that such a body would determine the reasons for our currently low estate and seek the means to implement a remedy. Commenting recently upon a request for aid for a language-teaching project, an officer of a foundation said, "If you language teachers would get together on what you want, perhaps we could help you."

Now it is essential to our rehabilitation to

convince those with whom we have failed that we have mended our ways. In other words we will get nowhere trying to "sell" the same old stuff in the same old way. Even aural-oral methods are not sufficiently up-to-date to be impressive, for we simply can't have students with us long enough. But means are at our disposal to be dramatically successful and we must use them. The President's Commission on Higher Education called upon us several years ago to create new, imaginative techniques of language teaching, to bring to the acquisition of foreign language skills incentives in line with today's practical needs, in line, it might be added, with human nature. If the Army Signal Corps can train coders and decoders (what is a code if not a foreign language?), by audio-visual techniques in half the time required by conventional methods, or quickly eliminate the unfit, language teachers can do the same. If we need expensive materials and equipment (our colleagues in science out-cost us about one thousand to one) let us prove that our results justify the cost. Let us give our administrators ammunition with which to fight for us and with us. Let us stop being self-pitying anachronisms in a world in which the planned miracle is a commonplace.

Is not the first step in seeking a rapid solution of our problem, as Dr. McGrath proposes, the organization of a deliberative body in cooperation with our colleagues in other fields? And can this not be achieved under the aegis of the Modern Language Association with the cooperation of the AAT and regional modern language teacher groups? The Modern Language Association is indeed embarking upon a campaign to rehabilitate the study of languages with the aid of a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. Our individual course of action may then be about as follows: 1) Support the officers of our various organizations in the work they undertake in our behalf. 2) Open our eyes and minds to the magic which technology has placed at our disposal. 3) Mend our fences and build new ones as though the salvation of humanity depended on the speed and degree of our success. It is not inconceivable that this should be so. If we believe it we may fulfill a destiny instead of suffering a fate.

GEORGE BORGLUM

Chrm. Dept. of French Wayne University



# Audio-Visual Aids

## NEW FILMS

### France:

"Flight to Romance," 27 min., Color. Free loan. Visit to ruins and monuments, and vacation land areas: Ireland, London, Paris, Normandy, Brittany, the French Riviera, Switzerland and Italy. (TWA, 80 East 42nd St. N. Y. 17)

"Riviera Dream," 2 reels. Sale: \$45. George Raft, Charles Boyer, Sonja Heinie, and other Hollywood stars at play on the French Riviera. (Sterling Films, Inc., 316 West 57th St., N. Y. 19)

"Flight to France," 12 min. Color. Free loan. Dramatic documentary of France. (TWA)

### Spain:

"Flight to Spain," 12 min. Color. Free loan. Dramatic documentary of Spain, offering a thrilling inside into the people, places and customs of that country. (TWA)

### Mexico: Features:

"Una gallega en México," 106 min. Cast: Joaquín Pardave, Nini Marshall, and Jorge Negrete. A comedy story of a Spanish refugee woman's experiences in Mexico. (Clasa Mohme, 501 Soledad St., San Antonio, Texas.) "Matrimonio y mortaja," 88 min. Cast: Rafael Baledón, Carmen González, Domingo Soler, & Mantequilla." Story of a rich Mexico City youth, engaged to one girl, but is forced to marry a beautiful country girl, whose ways and country actions help to complicate the plot. (Clasa-Mohme.) "Santa Pecadora," 110 min. Cast: Arturo de Córdoba, Zully Moreno. Story of a big city in 1900 and of Nucha, a woman who is struggling to rehabilitate herself with the help of an idealistic lawyer. (Clasa-Mohme)

### Mexico: Musical:

"Mexican Serenade," 12 min. Sale: \$22.50. Fiesta, music, songs, in a delightful tropical

treat. (Sterling Films, 316 W. 57th. St., N. Y. 19)

### Latin American Background:

"Ay-yé" (Mankind), Color. 27 min. Rental: \$15. A creative interpretation of the ageless story of mankind told by an impressionistic kaleidoscope of color, image and sound, filmed along the Pacific coast of South America. Photographed by Ian Hugo, chants and drums by Osborne Smith. (Brandon Films, 200 W. 57th St., N. Y.)

"Caribbean Cruise," 1 reel. Color. Sale: \$85. Highlight of a fascinating Caribbean holiday. (Sterling Films)

### Spanish 35 mm. Films based on Literary Works:

Three films have been recently released in Madrid, all based on well-known literary masterpieces: "Luna de sangre," based on Fernán Caballero's *Familia de Alvareda*, with main roles performed by Paquita Rico (Rita), Francisco Rabal (Pedro), Juan Manuel Soriano (Ventura) and Isabel de Pomés (Elvira). "Dulce nombre," based on the novel by Concha Espina, stars Isabel de Castro, Manuel Monroy and Mercedes Moyart; it is distributed by Universal Films Española. "Ruy Blas," the Hugo romantic play, is already being shown in the Madrid movie houses. It was adapted by Luis Fernández Ardavín, and directed by Cayetano Lucas de Tena, two very competent artists and well-known dramatists. (In Mexico "Él" is being filmed; it is based on book of similar title by Spanish newspaperwoman Mercedes Pinto.)

### Germany: Hansel and Gretel multiplies:

To our knowledge there are at least five different current prints of this famous story: 1) Austin Productions, P. O. Box 713, Lima, Ohio. 59 min. Color, with live actors and puppets. 2) George E. Wolf, 3 Glenwood Ave., Little Rock, N. Y. 30 min. Silent. Rental: \$3.

3) Sterling Films. 1 reel, sale: \$22.50. Live actors. 4) Sterling Films. 1½ reels, with Salzburg marionettes performing. Sale: \$35. 5) Film Classic, Fredonia, N. Y. 1 reel, silent, rental: \$5.

#### THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO IN GERMAN

A new Feature Length Opera film, the only complete version in 16 mm. film: Mozart's famous opera performed by the Berlin State Orchestra, in German dialogue, with English subtitles. 103 minutes, produced in 1951, available on various rental rates, depending on conditions (\$35, and \$60). Apply for particulars and booking: Brandon Films, Inc. 200 West 57th St., N. Y.

#### German Feature:

"Pastor Hall," 90 min. The true story of a German minister who refused to follow the Nazi "line" when his village was taken over by storm troopers and who was then thrown into a concentration camp. Made in England. Distributed by Association Films, 347 Madison Ave., N. Y. 17. \$17.50 rental.

#### Portugal, Italy:

"Flight to Portugal," 12 min. Color. Free loan. Similar to other "Flight" films. (TWA). "Flight to Italy," 12 min. Color. Free loan. Also follows same pattern of all TWA travel films, showing people, places and customs of respective country. (TWA's other titles are: "Flight to Greece," "Flight to Egypt," "Flight to Switzerland.")

#### NEW FRENCH VISUAL-AIDS CATALOGUE

FADC (Franco-American Distribution Center, 934 Fifth Ave., N. Y. 21) has just published its 1952 catalogue of lending collection, which now contains over 600 items, in films, lantern slides, exhibits and filmstrips on French literature, art and architecture, crafts, entertainment, geography, history, present-day conditions, people of France, sciences, music, sports, United Nations, exploration, current events, dance, etc.

#### NEW RECORDS

"Voyages of Christopher Columbus," in *Hear It Now!* 78 RPM \$2.80. for set of 2. Fifteen

minutes playing time. Adapted from the "Voyages of Christopher Columbus," by Armstrong Sperry. Hear Columbus explain his beliefs to the Reyes Católicos, the creak of the rigging as he sets forth on the "Sea of Darkness." Also his triumphal return with gifts from the New World. Dramatized and narrated by a cast of professional Broadway and radio actors. The "Voyages of Christopher Columbus," forms part of the Enrichment Records, produced with the help of nationally-known educators, and distributed by Enrichment Records, 246 Fifth Ave., N. Y. 1.

#### FRENCH LITERARY RECORDINGS

Forty-minute excerpts from *Andromaque*, *Horace*, *Le Cid*, and *Le jeu de l'amour et du hazard*, read by artists of the Comédie Française, are available on four 12-inch unbreakable records from the Period Music Co., 778 10th Ave., N. Y. (\$5.95 each).

#### FILMSTRIPS

##### Spain:

"If I Were Going to Spain," 1951. 58 frames. \$3. Correlated with "If I Were Going" basic second grade readers of the "Alice and Jerry Series," published by Row, Peterson Co., Evanston, Illinois. By means of questions and actual photos children are helped to learn about the customs of people of Spain. (SVE: Society for Visual Education, 1345 Diversey, Chicago)

"We Visit Spain," 1951. 22 frames. Color. \$4. Scenes of the people, buildings, industries, kinds of work and points of interest are presented in order to introduce facts about the country and stimulate pupils to appreciate and understand the people of western Europe. (Eye Gate, 330 W. 42nd. St. N. Y.)

##### France:

"We Visit France," 1951. 24 frames. Color. \$4. Same presentation as above and distributed also by Eye Gate.

"We Visit Paris," 1951. 24 frames. Color. \$4. As above. (Eye Gate)

"Janet Visits France," 1951. 26 frames. Color. \$3.95. Janet sees how French people live and work in fishing village and on rolling farms as well as many of the sights of the old country. (Curriculum Films, 41 Crescent St. Long Island, N. Y.)

## LITTLE-KNOWN SPANISH FILMS

"Los altos de Guatemala," Color, 15 min., rental: \$5. Spanish dialogue. This film takes you from the classroom to Guatemala, the new capital, thence to Antigua. At Antigua you are shown the two volcanoes Agua and Fuego, and scenes of the ruined convent of Santa Clara and the Church of San Francisco. From Antigua you are taken to the higher regions, Panajachel, that beautiful town on Lake Atitlán, Solalá, and Chichicastenango. Here you see the market and the incense-burning ritual on the steps of famous San Francisco Church. Close-ups of Indians of the highlands. The narrative is given in clear, concise Spanish. The film is designed for advanced high school and university students. Produced and distributed by Mr. Oscar M. Jiménez, 4723 Berverly Blvd., Los Angeles 4.

"Rancho Life," Color, 23 min. Apply for rental rate. The film opens with a fiesta in the patio of Rancho Solís, in the year 1835. As the dancing ends, little Carlos runs to his grandfather Don Solís, and asks for a story. The film continues as a portrayal of the story Don Solís tells of the early days of his rancho. He tells of his land, his vaqueros, cattle, rodeos, crops, neighboring rancheros, roping, branding, etc. Also in detail is the hide industry, including sale and shipping of hides to and from the coast. Don Solís closes his story by telling the end of the hide and tallow season which is always celebrated by a fiesta. The dancers return to the patio and the fiesta continues. (Arthur Barr Productions, 6211 Orroyo Glen, Los Angeles 42, Cal.)

## VISUAL REALIA IN FRENCH AND SPANISH

The Thrift Press, P. O. Box 85, Ithaca, N. Y. distributes, together with textbooks, songs,

flash cards, maps, test sheets, etc. The Globe Book Co., 175-Fifth Ave., N. Y., has for sale Flash Cards for French Pronunciation; and Language Learning Aids, Colorado Book Store, Boulder, has prepared a set of Vocabulary Flash Cards to match Leslie's *Spanish for Conversation* (Ginn), lesson by lesson, yielding some 1190 basic vocabulary stems, for \$1.35.

## MORE ON "ACCENT AIGU"

New French films in our February report listed "Accent aigu" misspelled and, one film. There are three films in the series, 10 min. each, selling at \$60 per film. The titles are: 1) *L'Arrivée à Paris*, the story of two American college students aboard ship, arrival at Le Havre, train to Paris and arrival at destination. 2) *Au Restaurant*, which follows the two students to restaurant, etc., etc. 3) *Courses et Achats*, pertaining to shopping through the main shopping district of Paris. (Focus Film Co., 1385 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles 24, Calif.)

J.S.

## AATF REALIA BUREAU

The National Information Bureau of the American Association of Teachers of French, under the direction of Prof. Armand Bégué, Brooklyn College, distributes first class realia, including visual-aids and phonograph recordings, on France, at very modest prices. Its material includes: maps, filmstrips of many sections of France, posters, folders, pamphlets, French songs, post cards from France, newspapers, calendars, art prints, and other miscellaneous material. Ask for complete list and its official Bulletin.

J.S.

# Notes and News

## Medina Centennial Celebration

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE PAN AMERICAN UNION  
With the Cooperation of the  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AND THE EMBASSY OF CHILE

### A SYMPOSIUM AND EXHIBITION

#### ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

FÉLIX NIETO DEL RÍO, Ambassador of Chile to the United States

LUTHER H. EVANS, Librarian of Congress

ALBERTO LLERAS, Secretary General, Organization of American States

#### EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

MAURY A. BROMSEN, Pan American Union

#### SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

Academy of American Franciscan History  
American Academy of Arts and Letters  
American Academy of Arts and Sciences  
American Academy of Political and Social Science  
American Anthropological Association  
American Antiquarian Society  
American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese  
American Catholic Historical Association  
American Institute of Graphic Arts  
American Jewish Historical Society  
American Library Association  
American Numismatic Society  
American Philological Association  
American Philosophical Society  
Association of American Geographers  
Ateneo Americano de Washington  
Bibliographical Society of America  
Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia  
Hispanic Society of America  
Instituto Internacional de Literatura Iberoamericana  
Inter-American Bibliographical and Library Association  
Linguistic Society of America  
Massachusetts Historical Society  
Modern Language Association of America  
Pan American Institute of Geography and History

#### Thursday, November 6

9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.—Registration of representatives and participants of the Symposium (Main Building, Pan American Union)

8:15 P.M.—OPENING PLENARY SESSION OF THE SYMPOSIUM AND INAUGURATION OF THE MEDINA LOAN EXHIBITION (Auditorium, Pan American Union.)

Black tie (optional)

Host: Alberto Lleras, Secretary General, Organization of American States

#### "Welcome"

Chairman: Félix Nieto del Río, Ambassador of Chile to the United States

Remarks formally inaugurating the Medina bibliographical and iconographical exhibition from the private collection of Maury A. Bromsen at the Columbus Memorial Library (Pan American Union). Introduction of the guest speaker.

Speaker: Guillermo Feliú Cruz, Curator of the Biblioteca Americana José Toribio Medina (National Library, Santiago, Chile); Professor of American History (University of Chile); and Secretary General of the Comisión Nacional de Commemoración del Centenario del Nacimiento de José Toribio Medina (1852-1952).

Address: "Medina, Americanista"

At the close of the meeting, the audience is cordially invited to visit the loan exhibition on display in the Columbus Memorial Library.

#### Friday, November 7

10:00 A.M.-12:00 N.—SECOND SESSION OF THE SYMPOSIUM (Coolidge Auditorium, Library of Congress)

Theme: Bibliography

Host: Luther H. Evans, Librarian of Congress

#### "Welcome"

Co-Chairman: Victor Hugo Paltsits, New York Public Library, retired

Lewis Hanke, University of Texas

Speakers: Lawrence C. Wroth, John Carter Brown Library: "Medina and the Librarian"

Sarah E. Roberts, Department of State: "The Bibliographies of Medina"

Francisco González de Cossío, Archivo General de la Nación, México, D. F.: "Medina's Role in Mexican Bibliographical Studies"

José López del Castillo y Kabangis, Bureau of Public Libraries, Manila: "Medina's Contribution to the Bibliography of the Philippines"

12:30 P.M.—Luncheon offered by the Library of Congress in honor of the chairmen and speakers of the Symposium (Whitall Pavilion, Library of Congress)



THIRD SESSION OF THE SYMPOSIUM (Coolidge Auditorium, Library of Congress)

Themes: History, Geography and Numismatics

Co-Chairmen: Clarence H. Haring, Harvard University  
Charles C. Griffin, Vassar College

Speakers: Arthur P. Whitaker, University of Pennsylvania: "Medina's Concept of History"

Abraham A. Neuman, President, Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning: "Medina, Historian of the Inquisition"

Irene A. Wright, Department of State: "Medina as a Biographer of New World Discoverers"

Robert I. Nesmith, New York City: "Medina the Numismatist"

5:00-7:00 P.M.—Reception given by the Ambassador of Chile and Señora de Nieto del Río for the representatives and participants of the Celebration (Embassy of Chile)

8:15 P.M.—Concert of chamber music in honor of the foreign guests of the Medina Centennial Celebration (Coolidge Auditorium, Library of Congress)

The Budapest String Quartet. A recital under the auspices of the Gertrude Clarke Whittall Foundation in the Library of Congress.

*Saturday, November 8*

10:00 A.M.-12:00 N.—FOURTH SESSION OF THE SYMPOSIUM (Auditorium, Pan American Union)

Themes: Literature, Philology and Linguistics

Co-Chairmen: Sturgis E. Leavitt, University of North Carolina

Irving A. Leonard, University of Michigan

Speakers: Federico de Onís, Columbia University: "Medina, Cervantista"

Arturo Torres-Rioseco, University of California (Berkeley): "Medina, Historian of Chilean Literature"

Paul T. Manchester, Vanderbilt University, and Charles Maxwell Lancaster, Vanderbilt University: "Medina and Araucan Epic Lore"

Charles E. Kany, University of California (Berkeley): "Medina as a Lexicographer"

2:00-4:00 P.M.—FIFTH SESSION OF THE SYMPOSIUM (Auditorium, Pan American Union)

Themes: Anthropology, Typography, Editing and Intellectual Cooperation

Co-Chairmen: Dana G. Munro, Princeton University  
Germán Arciniegas, Columbia University

Speakers: Martin Gusinde, Catholic University of America: "Medina's Interest in Anthropology"

Helmut Lehmann-Haupt, New School for Social Research: "Medina as a Printer"

Roscoe R. Hill, National Archives, retired: "Medina, Editor of *Archivaria*"

Rafael Heliodoro Valle, Ambassador of Honduras to the United States: "Medina and Inter-American Intellectual Cooperation"

8:15 P.M.—CLOSING PLENARY SESSION OF THE SYMPOSIUM (Auditorium, Pan American Union)

Black tie (optional)

Chairman: Alceu Amoroso Lima, Director, Department of Cultural Affairs, Pan American Union

Speaker: Maury A. Bromsen, Pan American Union, Executive Secretary of the Medina Centennial Celebration: "A Résumé of the Celebration"

The remainder of this session will be devoted to a general discussion by the members of the Symposium, each of whom is invited to voice briefly opinions and suggestions.

At the close of the meeting there will be a Farewell Reception offered by the Pan American Union.

### *Important Announcement*

This might be called a calendar of reconversion. On June 20 the MLA received a grant of \$120,000 to be spent over a three-year period for a constructive inquiry into the role which foreign languages should play in American life. Here is how it came about.

The MLA was founded in 1883 for "the advancement of the study of the modern languages and their literatures." Although the Association's active concern with pedagogy soon diminished and eventually died (the "Pedagogical Section" disappeared in 1903), the broad statement of purpose stood unchanged until 1927, when, without debate and almost without notice, the words "the study of" were replaced by "research in."

In 1939, a revived concern with the relations of teaching to scholarship led to the creation of an extra-constitutional "Commission on Trends in Education," which subsequently issued a number of reports. At a General Meeting of the Association on December 27, 1946, the Secretary (Percy Long), under direction of the Executive Council,

introduced the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted: the MLA "in devoting itself to research does not abandon its original purpose, the advancement of the study of modern languages and literatures; the Association is opposed to curtailment of these subjects in the curricula of colleges and secondary schools; and it regards the mutual understanding of peoples through understanding of their languages and literatures as essential to the implementing of the social international obligations which our country has undertaken."

On April 24, 1949, the Executive Council appointed a special committee to recommend revisions of the MLA Constitution. One year later the Council voted unanimously to recommend to the membership that we hereafter exist "to promote study, criticism, and research in modern languages and their literatures." This change was approved at the annual meetings in 1950 and 1951, the membership in effect endorsing the resolution passed by the Commission on Trends in March 1950: "The scholarly research of the

MLA cannot exist by itself; it must rest upon a broad base of work in the schools and colleges of the country. The promotion and support of the study of English and of foreign languages at all levels must, therefore, be a matter of continuing concern to the Association" (FMO, Sept. 1950, p. viii).

At its first meeting under the revised Constitution, March 29-30, 1952, the Executive Council addressed itself immediately and enthusiastically to the formulation of new policies (FMO, June, p. v). On April 17 the Executive

Secretary discussed their decisions with officials of the Rockefeller Foundation and on April 27 made a formal request for a grant of \$120,000. On June 20 the grant was approved. The MLA had come full circle. *We are back in the campaign to advance the study of foreign languages in this country.*

The *Modern Language Journal* rejoices at the reversion of the MLA and stands ready to cooperate in every possible way.

### *Dr. Everett T. Calvert—New Editor-in-Chief*

Dr. Everett T. Calvert has been appointed Editor-in-Chief of American Book Company as of September 1, 1952. In his new position, Dr. Calvert will succeed W. W. Livengood, of the editorial staff of American Book Com-

pany since 1912 and Editor-in-Chief since 1931. Mr. Livengood will assume new duties as Executive Assistant to the President.

### *Dr. Howard F. Kline—New Director of Hispanic Foundation*

Dr. Howard F. Kline, of the Department of History at Northwestern University, has been named Director of the Hispanic Foundation of the Library of Congress.

The Hispanic Foundation was established in the Library in 1939 to provide a "center for the pursuit of studies in Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American culture." It was

founded with the cooperation of the Hispanic Society of America and aided by the generosity of Mr. Archer M. Huntington. The Foundation is an active center, making every effort to enlarge the Library's already extensive Spanish holdings and to provide reference service on them for scholars all over the world.

### *International Fellowship Program*

The Institute of International Education and the Conference Board of Associated Research Councils announce that they have received a grant of \$300,000 for international scholarships from the Ford Foundation.

The Funds will be used to establish an international

fellowship program which will make it possible for one hundred outstanding young leaders and university professors from Southeast Asia and the Near East to receive advance training and to teach in the United States during the next academic year.

### *Fellowships in Latin America for Graduate Students*

The United States Office of Education, in cooperation with the Department of State, announces the availability of fellowships to United States graduate students as provided under the Convention for the Promotion of Inter-American Cultural Relations.

Two graduate students are exchanged each year between the United States and each of the republics signatory to the Convention. The participating countries, other than the United States, are as follows: Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic,

Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela. Since there is always a large number of candidates for Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Peru, there is a greater opportunity to be included on a panel to be presented to the other participating countries.

Students desirous of making application should write to the International Educational Program Branch, U. S. Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D.C. Applications must be received not later than January 15, 1953.

# Meetings

## *The Annual Meeting of the Association of Modern Language Teachers of the Middle States*

The Association of Modern Language Teachers of the Middle States held its annual meeting in Atlantic City at Haddon Hall on Saturday morning, November 24, 1951. Professor Merle I. Protzman of George Washington University, President of the Association, presided.

The first speaker was Dr. Leon Dostert, Head of the Georgetown University Institute of Languages and Linguistics. His topic was "Today's Approach to Language Learning." Dr. Dostert began by saying that the emphasis in language studies today is away from certain artificial or limited objectives towards more practical ends, that languages are now being studied for use rather than discipline. He next pointed out that the study of foreign languages is functional to a given culture, i.e. foreign languages are learned when they are *needed*. America's present position in world affairs, he went on to say, requires greater proficiency and diversity in foreign language skill. Lack of language knowledge has in the past been a handicap in the conduct of relations with other nations. He then gave a brief historical review of the approach to language learning in America at the end of the last century, prior to World War I, between World War I and World War II and since World War II. He called our attention to the present acute need for language proficiency and to the lessons derived from the World War II government sponsored language program and their present application. He commented on the increasing use of technical aids and the improvement and more effective utilization of these aids. His brief review of the experience obtained at the Institute of Languages and Linguistics was most interesting. Dr. Dostert concluded by emphasizing the need for skill and diversity in languages and a greater awareness and motivation. Improvement in methods, he said, will assist in meeting our needs today and tomorrow in the field of foreign languages.

The second speaker was Dr. Theodore Huebener, Director of Foreign Languages in the Schools of the City of New York, who spoke on the subject "Foreign Languages—the *Sine qua non* of World Understanding." The following is a summary of his paper: "In any endeavor to influence the thinking or the emotional reactions of a people, the medium of communication is, of course, of paramount importance. Whether it is a matter of advertising or information, of propaganda or education, language is the basic element. You simply cannot reach a people without using its tongue.

It is significant, and a sad commentary on our lack of preparation, that the vast majority of employees in the public affairs organizations of the State Department in

Europe are natives. Of the 1660 persons in the Information Centers Branch in Germany, for example, only the America House directors are Americans. This is due partly to the fact that it is considered good strategy to employ natives; it is also an economic matter, for they can be hired more cheaply. Essentially, however, it is due to the fact that there are simply not enough Americans available with a fluent command of the foreign language. Fortunately, there are some officials like High Commissioner McCloy and Land Commissioner Shuster who do speak a fluent German but the efforts of some of the lower officials are still pathetic.

What is equally bad is the widespread ignorance of German history, folkways, psychology and tradition. This inadequacy in language and area equipment not only decreases the effectiveness of our program but also lowers the respect of the natives for American accomplishments. If we are to re-orient the German thoroughly and to gain their esteem, we must send representatives who can speak German as fluently as their trained natives speak English.

That is exactly what the French have done in their very successful cultural effort known as the *action culturelle*. They have stressed the fact that every Frenchman in Germany has *une mission*, and that the cultural program is intended as much for their own personnel as for the Germans. Unfortunately, many cultured Americans in Europe ignore the program of the State Department and the ordinary G.I.'s do not even know that it exists.

In view of the close ties with Germany for a long time to come, German ought to be taught far more intensively and widely in our schools than it is. This is a matter not of sentiment but of sheer practicality.

What is true of German, is valid for other countries in a somewhat different way. Through the Information Centers Service, which is world-wide, the State Department endeavors to spread a knowledge of America, particularly in West European countries. There are dozens of such centers in Italy, France, and Spain. There, too, the program should be conducted by Americans equipped with the language—the very languages that we teach in our schools and colleges.

Such an equipment is not merely an asset: it is a *sine qua non*. If our country is to achieve its aims and win the cold war, it must extend the teaching of foreign languages and train a much larger number of young people in French, German, Italian, Spanish—and Russian. Whether we like it or not, Russian is now spoken as far west as the Elbe river. It would be shortsighted to disregard this fact.

Fortunately, something is being done, notably by the

Institute of Languages and Linguistics in Washington, where 17 languages are being taught intensively on the college level. However, we must begin far earlier, preferably in the grades, if language training is to be more effective. In Europe the language courses are from 6 to 9 years. Our two and three year stints are pathetically inadequate.

The center of gravity, political, economic, scientific and cultural has swung to the United States. This is unquestionably the American era. We are in a remarkably fortunate, powerful and responsible position. We have demonstrated our goodwill to the world by boundless generosity and magnanimity. Should we not enforce our efforts and make them permanent by cultural and ideological effectiveness?

The automobile and airplane, radio and television, are wonderful achievements. However, if we are to hold our position of leadership among the nations of the world, we must raise our scholastic and intellectual standards. Particularly must we devote more attention to the study of the cultures of other peoples and to what is essentially the basis of civilization and the medium of international understanding—languages.

After a discussion of the two papers, the annual business

meeting was held. The Secretary's report was not read in as much as it had been published in the March 1951 issue of the *Modern Language Journal*. The Treasurer's report which had been approved by the auditing committee was read.

The following officers were elected for the year 1952:

**President:** Dr. Albert W. Holzmann, Head of the German Department, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

**1st Vice-President:** Dr. James D. Powell, Department of Romance Languages, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**2nd Vice-President:** Dr. Edna C. Fredrick, Department of Romance Languages, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware

**3rd Vice-President:** Sister M. Annunciata, Nazareth Academy, Rochester, New York.

**Secretary-Treasurer:** Dr. Kathryn B. Hildebran, Head of Department of Modern Languages, Western Maryland College, Westminster, Maryland

Respectfully submitted

KATHRYN B. HILDEBRAN  
Secretary-Treasurer

### *New England Modern Language Association Forty-Ninth Annual Meeting*

The forty-ninth annual meeting of the New England Modern Language Association was held in Northampton, Massachusetts, on Friday, May 9 and Saturday, May 10, 1952.

The Friday evening dinner was held at the Hotel Northampton at seven o'clock. Special guests were President Benjamin F. Wright of Smith College, President Roswell Ham of Mt. Holyoke College, and President Charles W. Cole of Amherst College, the speaker of the evening. After dinner, the President of the Association, Miss Dorothy M. Bement, welcomed the members and their guests and presented President Wright, who brought the greetings of Smith College and wished the members success in their endeavors to train our people in the use of foreign tongues, the great need of which is felt so pressing in our dealings with the other peoples of the world.

President Cole prefaced his remarks with some humorous reminiscences of his own early experiences in learning foreign languages, and with a glimpse at the situation at Amherst College, which maintains a language requirement, not only because it recognizes the importance of foreign languages in international affairs, but for reasons of "intellectual sophistication." Adapting a query of Kipling, he asked, "What know they of English, who only English know?" The students of Amherst in elementary and intermediate language classes have the opportunity of working with a native speaker in addition to their regular class work. In order to satisfy the requirement, they must be able to read a foreign tongue and understand it when spoken.

Addressing himself to his subject, "Foreign Languages and International Affairs," Dr. Cole contrasted the position of world predominance, economically, militarily, and financially, into which the United States has been thrust, with the similar position occupied in earlier centuries by

Spain, France, and England. The period of predominance for each of the other nations came at a time when it was expansionist and imperialistic, whereas America's expansion took place during its infancy. Our present mood is really the opposite of expansionist. The only way we can lead the world into a peaceful era is by our getting out of our shell and getting to know and understand other peoples, a thing which is admittedly difficult for us. The task can never be accomplished unless we have large numbers of Americans trained to communicate our best ideals to our neighbors on their own terms, that is in their own languages.

The sessions of Saturday followed the schedule which follows:

#### SMITH COLLEGE—STODDARD HALL

10:30 A.M.—"Correlating the Teaching of Foreign Language in School and College." A panel discussion

Moderator: James Grew, Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.

Members of the Panel:

Professor Theodore Andersson, Yale University  
Miss E. Lenore Placido, Brookline (Mass.) High School

Mr. Robert Kesler, Phillips Exeter Academy  
Professor Ruth Young, Smith College

#### 12:00 N.—BUSINESS MEETING

At the conclusion of the panel discussion President Bement called the business session to order. The report of the May, 1951 meeting was accepted as printed in the *Modern Language Journal* of October, 1951 (pages 489-491). The Treasurer's report for 1950-1951 was accepted as printed in the *Bulletin* of February, 1952 (pages 28-29).

The following amendment to the constitution, recommended by the Board of Officers and Directors at its



meeting of Jan. 26, 1952 was presented to the members: "In Article II, Section 2, line 1, change the word 'three' to 'four,' and add at the end of the section, 'Emeritus Membership. Any person who has been a member of the organization for fifteen or more years, and has retired from active teaching, shall, upon application, become an emeritus member, and shall be exempt from the payment of dues.'" The amendment was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Professor Camillo P. Merlino, Chairman of the Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers for 1952-1953.

**President:** Kathryn L. O'Brien, Brookline High School, Brookline, Mass.

**Vice-Presidents:** Carol B. Bogman, Mt. Pleasant High School, Providence, R.I.

A. Louise Carlson, Concord High School, Concord, N.H.

Josephine F. Menotti, Crosby High School, Waterbury, Conn.

Helen E. Patch, Mt. Holyoke College, South Hadley, Mass.

Edward J. Powers, Technical High School, Boston, Mass.

**Librarian:** Eva M. Grenier, Walnut Hill School, Natick, Mass.

**Editor:** Joseph Brown, Jr., University of Connecticut, Storrs, Conn.

**Business Manager:** Joseph S. Stookins, Loomis School, Windsor, Conn.

**Secretary-Treasurer:** Mary A. Consodine, Girls' High School, Boston, Mass.

**Directors** (three years): Elsie M. Gervais, Edward Little High School, Auburn, Maine

Hubert S. Packard, The Choate School, Wallingford, Conn.

Ruth Sedgwick, Mt. Holyoke College, South Hadley, Mass.

It was moved, seconded, and voted that the Secretary-Treasurer be instructed to cast one ballot for the entire list. Miss O'Brien and Miss Consodine were introduced to the group.

A rising vote of thanks was given to Miss Bement for her fine work in arranging the meeting, and to Smith College for its hospitality.

#### SMITH ALUMNAE HOUSE—ELM STREET

12:45 P.M.—Luncheon—Conference Hall

2:00 P.M.—GERMAN SECTION—Council Room

Chairman: Gerhard Wilke, Suffield Academy, Suffield, Conn.

Speaker: Frederick C. Sell, Mt. Holyoke College, So. Hadley, Mass. "Die Sprachvermengung in den Spätwerken Thomas Manns."

2:00 P.M.—ITALIAN SECTION—Music Room

Chairman: Michele Cantarella, Smith College

Speakers: James M. Ferrigno, University of Massachusetts: "Influsso iberico nel siciliano ad altri dialetti meridionali."

Maria T. Arrighi, Smith College: "Ricordo di Cesare Pavese."

2:00 P.M.—SPANISH SECTION—Committee Room

Chairman: Charles Fraker, University of Massachusetts  
Speaker: Julián Marías, Wellesley College: "Unamuno."

3:15 P.M.—FRENCH SECTION—Conference Room

Chairman: Vincent Guilloton, Smith College

Speaker: Jacques Guicharnaud, Yale University: "Quand Victor Hugo imite Victor Hugo."

This meeting was devoted to Victor Hugo in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of his birth.

Respectfully submitted

EDWARD J. POWERS

Secretary-Treasurer

#### South Atlantic Modern Language Association—Russian Section

The following is the tentative program planned for the Thanksgiving Meeting, which will be held in Miami, Florida:

Words of Welcome: Dean Charles Tharp, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Miami.

"Needs in Russian Teaching Material": Jacob Ornstein, U.S. Department of Agriculture (Graduate School), Washington, D.C.

"Nicolai Gogol and the Good Old Time": Mrs. Eva

Friedl, University of Miami.

"More Attention to Methods of Teaching Russian in the U.S.A.," N. P. Autonomoff, Editor, *Guide to Teachers of the Russian in America*.

"Preparation of Russian Instructional Aids in the Form of Recorded Sound," J. D. Wright, Georgia Institute of Technology.

"Russian Studies in SAMLA Territory," Berthold C. Friedl, University of Miami.

## Book Reviews

HALL, ROBERT, *A Short History of Italian Literature*. Ithaca: Linguistica. 1951. pp. 429. Price, \$5.00

Dr. Robert Hall is professor of linguistics at Cornell University, and, heretofore, his publications have been primarily in the linguistic field. He has now published a history of Italian literature in which he has shown himself to be a thorough historian and a keen critic.

Professor Hall's history of Italian literature evidences familiarity with the sources and an intimate knowledge of the works discussed therein. Authors have been keenly evaluated and their portraits sensitively executed. This is a serious and a good book.

The introduction is done in a masterful manner, and, linguistically speaking, is fuller than those one finds in most histories of Italian literature. From the standpoint of cultural background, the author could have offered more by using available material. Thus, to state that in the early centuries of the Christian era "knowledge of Greek became a rarity in the western part of Europe, even more so than it is in our own times" (p. 13) is to obscure the fact that the contacts of the new church with Greek thought were very intimate. Migne has an entire section of his monumental work dedicated to the Greek Fathers of the Christian Church. Evelyn Underhill has illumined the contribution of Greek thought to Christianity in *The Mystic Way* (New York, Dutton, 1913). St. Augustine in his *Confessions* states that he owed to Plato's works his turning to the Christian God. Boethius (Vth Century) translated into Latin some of the works of Aristotle, and both Plato and Aristotle played a large rôle in the "Renaissance of the XIIth century," as Charles Homer Haskins qualifies the contacts with classicism that enriched the intellectual life of Europe at that time. Greek was the official language at the court of Palermo in the same epoch, and the connections with Constantinople were many and deep, according to George Sarton in his *Introduction to a History of Science*, Vol. II, Part One, (Baltimore, Williams and Wilkins Co., 1931), and, especially, according to Haskins who has investigated this problem better than any other critic.

In reviewing Professor Hall's new history, we are taking into account two main points of reference: the general thesis presented in it, and the analysis of single authors discussed therein. Professor Hall has soberly and painstakingly applied an historical method in following and illustrating the growth of Italian literature, shunning the "aesthetic" method with its lyrical outbursts, and fanciful creation of connections that exist only in the fertile minds of the followers of that school. He views the entire course of Italian literature (p. 399) as a succession of three high peaks intercepted by two interludes in which literature was barren of significance. He considers the XIIIth and

XIVth centuries as the Golden Age that was followed by a period of decline in the XVth century. Then came the Silver Age at the end of the XVth century and the beginning of the XVIth century, followed by a fatal dip during the age of the Counter-Reformation at the end of the XVIth century to the middle of the XVIIIth century; then another high peak in the XIXth century and in our own time.

Very modestly the author claims no originality. In fact, the division that he has accepted is substantially the one followed by our common teacher Vittorio Rossi, and by the distinguished historical critics who have preceded Professor Hall. In the analysis of the individual authors studied, he has used his own reactions to their works, and this, in the opinion of this reviewer, constitutes the chief asset of his work.

In the presentation of his general thesis, we should have expected a less mechanical treatment. To have stressed the political and social background is one of the merits of this work, but to make literary significance contingent on political and social conditions is to confuse culture and art. We agree that political and social conditions influence greatly the culture of Italy. To prove a corresponding and similar reaction in the artistic field is a difficult, indeed, impossible task. When the creative impulse is there, art will blossom out no matter how tragic circumstances are. Dante wrote the *Divine Comedy* while in exile. Michelangelo and Titian lived in one of the most disturbed and chaotic periods of Italian history. And so did Galilei, Campanella, Tassoni, Boccacini and Vico. Professor Hall himself views the XVth century as a time of relative peace and prosperity. Yet, he looks on that century as poor in literary significance.

We should also like to see modified the statement that the two interludes were periods of "utter decline" (p. 399). Critics often call "decline" what is merely "change" in the course of history. To state that the XVth century marked a decline from the age of Dante is to establish a relationship where complete independence is required. Why should and how could the Quattrocento have continued on the same line of growth as the Trecento? Moreover, the fact that no literary figure of the stature of Dante appeared in those two ages does not constitute a "decline," since one great man does not constitute the greatness or the sterility of an age. The XVth century did not possess poets like Dante, but it could boast of encyclopedic minds like Leon Battista Alberti and Pico, not to mention Politian and Leonardo. (Incidentally, Leonardo has not received a treatment commensurate to his contribution to culture and art. The literary art evidenced in his *Penstieri* should have been fully treated in a history of Italian literature.) It is true that most critics call the XVth century the "century without poetry," to quote one of them,

Benedetto Croce, but the greatness of an age is not constituted by poetry alone, and that century was most significant in the history of the arts, as well as for the contribution that men like Alberti, Palmieri, Piccolomini, Savonarola, and many others gave to the political and social sciences. (See Carlo Curcio, *La politica italiana del 400*, Firenze, 1932). Even in the field of literature the letters of Alessandra Macigni Strozzi, the tales extracted from the sermons of Bernardino of Siena and many of the diaries and memoirs then written (like those of Morelli) document the presence of a new direction in literature. As to the XVIIth century, the case is even clearer. Marino and his followers represented only a very small segment of literary life, repudiated by their thoughtful contemporaries, as Professor Hall proves when he states "The excesses of Marinism and of the decadent epico—romantic tradition did not go unprotested" (p. 290), and quotes Stigliani's *Occhiale* and the works of Tassoni and Boccacini. As was the case in the XVth century, the age of the Counter-Reformation was significant not in poetry, but in the scientific contributions of Galilei and his disciples, and in the field of aesthetics. (See Croce, *Eld del Barocco*, Bari, 1929).

In the treatment of classicism, we should have liked a more objective and factual approach. Classicism was one of the various cultures that enriched Italian art together with Arabic, Provençal, and English cultures. Some poets took themes and images from classicism as did Politian, just as others borrowed material from the French epic or the Arthurian romances, as did Pulci, Boiardo and Ariosto. Others modelled their art on events, actual or imaginary, related to the social setting in which they wrote, as did Machiavelli in the *Mandragola* and countless others in the drama and short stories of the XVIth century. It is evident that the three types of material were on the same footing in relation to the creativeness and significance of art. A poet chooses his material according to his temperament, training and circumstances of his life. What counts is the new life that his imagination and sensitivity can infuse into it. The *Stanze*, *Orlando Furioso* and the *Mandragola* vary in content and form, but they possess the same artistic and human values with which their authors enriched them. Although on a smaller scale, classical themes have been used long after the fashion established during the Renaissance. In our own age there are many instances in which poets have recast ancient myths into modern form.

To this poetic or artistic use of classicism, one should add the study of the contribution of the humanists to philology (Valla, Politian) and the objective reconstruction of the classical world by archeologists such as Flavio Biondo and Ciriaco dei Pizziccoli, a work that is still going on in our own time. Viewing classicism in this light would lead us to see more clearly the modern traits of the civilization of the XVth and XVIth centuries. For the primary goal of our study of these centuries is to present them as a new phase of human history in which writers, artists and scientists were conscious of the originality of their age as well as of the originality of their art. This was true in spite of the statement of Petrarch that the noble goal of all men was that of "becoming Romans again" (*Romanos fieri*), and the poses of court poets of the type of Filelfo or pedants like Giraldi. The works of the latter belong to the category of those who in all ages are glamorized by the

indiscriminating public, and then are forgotten. The great works of the XVIth century were as living to contemporary readers as the great works of our time are living to us. Needless to say, many works of the XVIth century are still alive for us, for real art is ageless.

In the light of these beliefs it is difficult for us to subscribe to the idea that guided Professor Hall in writing his chapter that bears the title of "Humanism in the vernacular" (pp. 182-216). If humanism was the classical aspect of the culture of the Renaissance, this chapter should have dealt with the beneficial contacts that literary life in the XVIth century enjoyed with classicism. It could have included the translations into the vernacular of Greek and Latin works which would have shown that the language normally accepted and used at that time was the vernacular, while Latin was the universal language employed in the scientific and intellectual spheres. But, in the absence of this clear and basic distinction, critics, and Professor Hall, too, see humanism in every manifestation of the intellectual life of that century. Gelli's *Circe* and Vida's *Christias* logically belong to this chapter, but the works of Pomponazzi, the popular farces of *Alione* and *Beolco*, the *Commedia dell'arte* and other forms of popular art, many of the historical works mentioned by Professor Hall, the writings of Aretino, Doni, and Dolce do not belong here at all. It is certainly strange that in a chapter dealing with "humanism" Professor Hall should write that Machiavelli in his *Istorie* abandoned "the humanistic tradition of rhetorical eloquence for the more modern procedure of developing certain principles that the historian discerns in his material" —(p. 201). In fact, this was the real glory of Machiavelli and of the critical realism of his age, the discovery of new forms of thought and of art, independently from those contemporaries in whom the blind cult of antiquity stifled originality and creativeness. Berni, Gelli, Ariosto, Lasca, the quixotic Aretino himself bear witness that it was possible to admire antiquity and yet believe in the independence of modern art from classicism. Berni's *Dialogo contro i poeti* was not an isolated example of this declaration, and Ariosto's *Seventh Satire* clearly distinguished between legitimate and spurious humanism. After all, in Sperone Speroni's *Dialogo della lingua*, Bembo is made to debate against a humanist, which shows that Speroni distinguished Bembo's views from those of the humanist.

The main value of this history of Italian literature lies in the personal manner in which Professor Hall has treated the numerous authors that crowd Italian literature. He has presented them in their human attributes, as would a man who seeks human traits in reading their works. Such is the case especially of Professor Hall's treatment of Machiavelli, Aretino, Ariosto, Gelli, and other men of the XVIth century, the century that Professor Hall knows best. With a great economy of words, the *Mandragola* by Machiavelli and his *Dialogo della lingua* (pp. 236-237) are masterfully analyzed. The evaluation of the *novella* in the XVIth century, "amusing, satirical, but immoral and superficial, without much individualization or analysis of character" (p. 216), seems to us quite correct, and so is Professor Hall's negative idea of the lyric poetry of that time. We agree with him too, in having given a special place to Michelangelo and Gaspara Stampa as lyric poets.

Another distinct merit of this book is that of having

shown the influence of specific Italian works on foreign literatures, especially those of France, Spain, England, and Germany. In this manner, the reader is led to notice the interdependence of the various European literatures on one another. Pulci, Boiardo, and Ariosto took the subject matter of their poems from French culture, just as Spencer, Milton and Shakespeare borrowed from Italian culture the material of their art. This distinction between art and culture explains the presence of borrowed content in various literatures without offending the originality of the truly great authors.

The book is unusually free of typographical errors. On page 163, "fround" obviously should read "found."

In the discussion of *Così è, se vi pare*, the parenthetical (mother-in-law and daughter-in-law) should be changed to "mother-in-law and son-in-law," for the question of the identity of Lina is questioned by her mother, Signora Frola, and Lina's husband, Signor Ponza.

In translating from the *Life of Cola de' Rienzi*, the phrase "Li pellegrini erano scannati e derobbati" (p. 62) Professor Hall writes "Pilgrims were robbed and then their throats were cut." Italian malefactors of the XIVth century seemed to have possessed a greater degree of prudence and decency than we grant them: they first killed the pilgrims and then robbed them. Why kill them after their possessions had been seized?

On the whole, we seem to have disagreed only with that part of this valuable work in which Professor Hall has followed generally accepted views. The warm praise that the work deserves is for the conclusions of his own, when he has treaded on the old ground by striking his own path. Professor Hall has written a work that is very readable, and very useful for those who want to become acquainted with Italian literature.

D. VITTORINI

University of Pennsylvania

*The Pocket Oxford German Dictionary. German-English*, compiled by M. L. Barker and H. Homeyer; *English-German*, compiled by C. T. Carr. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1951, xvi, 440, ii, 222 pp. \$2.50.

The German-English section of this compact and handy volume is a reprint of the 1946 edition, "with corrections and Addenda." Since the changes seem to be minor (except for the addition of a list of strong and irregular verbs), only the *Pocket Oxford English-German Dictionary*, now published for the first time as a supplement to the older work, will be considered in this review.

The new compilation—available also as a separate volume—is considerably less comprehensive than the older. It contains but little more than half the number of pages. A rough estimate of the number of single English words defined, however, is 19,000, or about two-thirds the number of single German words treated in the German-English section. This discrepancy is attributable, judging from an examination of a small cross-section of each unit, to the smaller proportion, in the new unit, of idioms, phrases, and word patterns. This is unfortunate, in the opinion of this reviewer, since a dictionary "designed primarily for . . . English-speaking users who wish to speak and write German" should devote special attention to the difficult

area of word-groups even if it be with some loss of comprehensive treatment of single words.

Since no concessions have been made to the American user, the usual numerous handicaps of a British-made dictionary will confront him: *Cinema* is listed for *movies*, *chemist's shop* for *drugstore*, *acroplane* for *airplane*, *petrol* for *gasoline*, *petrol pump* for *gas station*, etc., etc.

The claim of "fuller treatment than usual . . . [of] the vocabulary of everyday usage" seems justified, as judged by a quick check-up in various areas of the colloquial language. The treatment cannot be said to be entirely adequate, however, for there are many unwarranted omissions here, as in most other pocket dictionaries—for example, *toothbrush*, *toothpaste*, *shaving cream*, *aspirin*, *grippe*, *adhesive tape*, *table lamp*, *floor lamp*, *this morning*, *this evening*, *the day after tomorrow* (although *the day before yesterday* is included), *to fall in love*, *good luck*, *bad luck*, *bathub*, *shower (bath)*, *living room*, *by special delivery*, *cleaner*, *at the cleaner's*. No good reason exists, in a dictionary meant primarily for use in speaking and writing German for the omission of such everyday terms as those above when room is simultaneously found for numerous entries such as *composing-stick*, *convolvulus*, *to malingering*, *con-sanguinity*, *limpet*, *binacle*, *plinth*, and *trunnion*.

To be applauded is the frequent indication, under the German equivalents of an English entry, of the specific connotation of each such equivalent—for example, the English noun *account* is defined as follows: (*bill*) *Rechnung*, f.; (*narrative*) *Bericht*, m., *Schilderung*, f.; (*banking*) *Konto*, n.; (*of conduct*) *Rechenschaft*, f. While this highly useful principle has not been carried through always, enough has been done to aid the student greatly. Most compilations of like compass, and indeed many larger ones, give the student little information of this kind and he therefore often selects the wrong equivalent, with frequently ludicrous effect. Would that he could approach this and all other English-German dictionaries with the expectation of systematic, almost complete guidance in this respect!

The definitions are generally reasonably accurate and fairly complete. A few deficiencies which were noted in passing follow: Under the English noun entry *tie*, only *Halsbinde*, f., and *Schlips*, m. are given for neckwear, *Krawatte*, f., being omitted; for *hangover*, only *Katerjammer*, m., not also *Kater*, m., is listed; for *to turn off* is given only *absperrern*, which is misleading, especially since *abdrehen*, *abstellen*, and *ausdrehen* are omitted; under *grape* is listed only *Weinbeere*, f., not the more common (*Wein*) *traube*, f.

A brief but useful list of names of countries and other proper names is included as an appendix. The volume has the attractive and sturdy binding which is characteristic of the Oxford publications, and the print though small is very legible. On the whole, the new compilation constitutes a worthy if somewhat less ambitious companion work to the German-English unit. Within the limitations indicated, it will prove to be a very useful aid in its field, especially for quick reference.

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CHATEAUBRIAND, FRANÇOIS RENÉ DE, *Atala* and *René: A New Translation* by Irving



Putter. MLA Translation Series. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1952. With Foreword, Introduction, Text, and Notes. Pp. 122. Paper. Price, \$1.60.

The best of scholarship and good-will encounters peril in this matter of translation. Witness Unamuno entitling an essay, "El reposo es silencio." Certainly a degree of rashness (not necessarily unbecoming) is required of one who would attempt to draw the secrets of Chateaubriand's stylistic artistry "from their dread abode."

This reviewer believes that our gratitude is due to Professor Putter (assistant professor of French at the University of California) for throwing himself into the breach in the present instance, for he has accomplished a work ("first in a series of translations to be published under the auspices of the MLA") that is well justified (the last English version of *Atala*, 1802; of *René*, "presumably" 1857), and in doing so has shown uncommon sensitivity throughout to linguistic and literary letter and spirit.

Here are a few samples of "goodness" from a storehouse where most is good: p. 100. "Her feelings were surpassingly gentle" (La douceur de ses sentiments était infinie); p. 41. "She was as irresistible as she was passionate" (pleine de passions, elle fut pleine de puissance); p. 42. "the spell (les charmes) of religion;" p. 44. "The thunderbolt set fire to the woods, and the burning expanse spread like a flaming mass of hair. Flashing, fuming columns besieged the heavens, which vomited bolts of lightning into the vast conflagration. Then the Great Spirit covered the mountains with heavy shadows. From the midst of this vast chaos rose a confused uproar formed by the crashing winds, the moaning trees, the howling of fierce beasts, the crackling of the conflagration, and the constant flashing of the lightning hissing as it plunged into the waters." (La foudre met le feu dans les bois; l'incendie s'étend comme une chevelure de flammes; des colonnes d'étincelles et de fumée assiègent les nues, qui vomissent leurs foudres dans le vaste embrasement. Alors le Grand Esprit couvre les montagnes d'épaisse ténèbres; du milieu de ce vaste chaos s'élève un mugissement confus formé par le fracas des vents, le gémissement des arbres, le hurlement des bêtes féroces, le bourdonnement de l'incendie et la chute répétée du tonnerre qui siffle en s'éteignant dans les eaux.)

The translator rings with virtuosity the changes on *chagrin*, *douleur*, *malheur*, *sauvage*, *trouble*, and the like. His care for variety with correctness is in fact constant and admirable.

Not so good (to this reviewer) are: P. 27, "Ah," I went on quickly (avec vivacité), "if your heart could speak to mine;" p. 28, "Handsome prisoner, I have foolishly (follement) given in to your desire;" p. 41, "Suddenly the daughter of exile split the air with a voice (fit éclater dans les airs une voix) full of emotion and melancholy;" p. 42, "fine umbrage" (de beaux ombrages); p. 65, "One day, perhaps, distaste (dégout) would have set in with satisfaction (satiété)"—Cf. Shelley: "love's sad satiety;" p. 67, "throne of candor" (trône de candeur) might leave no impression with many readers; p. 87, "Can your sweetness ever fade away?" (Ne perdez-vous jamais vos douceurs!); p. 90, "How your tombs steeped (remplissaient) my soul with distaste (dégout) for this earth!"

The following seem to be clear cases of error: p. 85,

"... so increased his sadness, that he felt he had to seek consolation from his old friends" (... il fuyait jusqu'à ses vieux amis); p. 85, "I learned to know death on the lips (sur les lèvres) of the very person who had given me life;" p. 94, "For a time I was tempted to plunge into a totally new environment" (Je voulais me jeter pendant quelque temps, etc.); p. 106, "overcome by the glorious sorrow of her saintly figure, and crushed by the grandeur of religion" (vaincu par la glorieuse douleur de la sainte, etc.). We have here rather the martyr's pride in the endurance of pain.

The Foreword and Introduction (14 pages) cover the life and character of Chateaubriand, place his influence in its historical and literary setting, describe the genesis of *Atala* and *René* (those "burning twins" containing "all the major elements of the nascent Romantic movement") and analyze and appraise their qualities. Five pages of notes take care of historical and geographical matters in *Atala*, and endeavor to establish order out of the chaos of Chateaubriand's ideas of Indian customs. Three pages of notes devoted to *René* (together with the Introduction) bind its author with his brothers in pessimism, disenchantment, ennui, and so on, in England, France, and Germany, from Ossian to Flaubert. All is done with authority and comprehensiveness.

Four cases (!) of Bernadin de Saint-Pierre survived proofreading of the Introduction. "Creater" is also there. Apparently these are the only misspellings. The printing is fine.

The reviewer commends this book warmly, and congratulates its author.

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VOLTAIRE, *Choix de contes*. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by F. C. Green. Cambridge University Press, New York, 1951, pp. xxxi + 247. Price, \$2.00.

This is the first time, so far as I know, that *Zadig* and *Candide* have been found between the same covers in a textbook offered to American students, a circumstance which in itself alone renders the advent of this volume important and welcome to many instructors. As to the wisdom of providing only 197 notes for 247 pages of text there will be much disagreement.

This reviewer would far rather see too few than too many footnotes. The fashion among us now is to defer too lavishly and too slavishly to the "beds-of-ease" psychology, in the forlorn hope of keeping all starting candidates within the foreign-language fold. We know, of course, that appreciation of language and style has deteriorated as a result of progressively lessened knowledge of English grammar and English vocabulary fundamentals, and that, though our young people still chew and swallow hard and varied foods in the science and business fields, main sources of immediate material profit, in language and literature they want their diet soft, and as unmixed as possible. The question is how far can we conscientiously accede to the popular craving, to the refusal of intellectual effort in translation making for more and more disregard of good literature. Sometimes, when I am impressed by an especially apt rendition of a passage, I ask how it was

arrived at, with the hope of being enabled to issue a compliment, only to see the student's eyes wander to the bottom of the page, and hear the complacent, ringing declaration that it is all in a note. I try mildly to shame him into resentment against all such editorial intellectual condescension.

Professor Green (of the University of Cambridge) treats his student-public as they should be treated, namely, as persons embarked *with himself* upon the learning enterprise. In England, indeed, they seem to have a clearer sense than in America of the necessity of this basic teacher-student brotherhood in education.

There comes the question of whether or not to expurgate Voltaire's philosophical tales for undergraduate uses. The Heath (Babbitt) edition of *Zadig and Other Stories* wisely, in my view, makes some cuts. With Professor Green, on the other hand, we see *Voltaire tout entier* à sa proie attaché. Obviously he envisages a riper clientèle for his book than that presented by our freshmen and sophomores.

Judging from my own class-experience with Voltaire's *contes philosophiques*, I should say that more than average maturity of mind is essential for their enthusiastic comprehension. There was a time when the relative lack of interest in them on the part of the majority of students surprised me, lack of interest, that is, apart from sexually insinuating details. But the more I read Voltaire, and the more I learn of contemporary undergraduate preparation and propensities, the less surprised I feel.

Professor Green's introduction is stimulating and adequate. He writes: "His language (in *Candide*) is absolutely transparent, so that nothing intervenes between the reader and the brutal realities communicated by the narrator, who betrays, however, *in the urgency of his style*, the sympathy and impotent rage aroused in him by these calamities." (Italics mine.)

*Zadig, Candide, Le monde comme il va (Vision de Babouc), Memnon (ou La sagesse humaine), and Micromégas* appear to constitute the best possible selection, for student use, of the *contes* written before 1760. The editor half promises a second volume of selections out of those that came on later from "Voltaire, the Sage of Ferney."

A. M. WITHERS

Concord College

RACINE, *Andromaque*, Edited by H. R. Roach and R. P. L. Ledéser. D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1951, pp. xlvii+111. Price, \$1.28.

A rather long Introduction prepares the student for an intelligent study of *Andromaque*. The editors are right in assuming that the average American student lacks the background without which Racine is very likely to leave him cold. Beginning with a statement of the importance of critical theory in French literature, the editors explain historically and psychologically the intellectual and social climate of the seventeenth century. They next trace the origins and development of the theater in France including a discussion of dramatic theory. Racine's Jansenistic roots (no pun intended) are traced. The art of Racine is inevitably contrasted with that of Shakespeare. For students meeting both Racine and French poetry for the first time,

there is a "note" on French versification. *Andromaque* is properly introduced with a discussion of its first production, contemporary reaction, sources, plot, characters, and style. A select bibliography rounds off the Introduction.

The editors were aware of the danger of trying to compress so much material into relatively little space: "...the compression required by a sketch necessitates an oversimplification that can be misleading." For the most part they have avoided the reefs. There are, however, such statements as this one: "Their success is written in a page of wonderful freshness and vigour in the literature of France, and the sonnets and odes (italics mine) of Ronsard and du Bellay have a spontaneity such as no later age fully recaptured." The *Art poétique* of Boileau is dated "towards the end of the century" although space could have been saved and accuracy gained by giving the exact date. Two other details. Pascal wrote eighteen *Lettres provinciales*, not seventeen, as stated. Professor Ledéser's definition of hiatus postulates contiguous accented vowels (!).

The text is based on the Mesnard edition with no modernization other than the change of *oi* to *ai* in the endings of the imperfect and conditional and in such words as *connoître* and *foible*. The reverse procedure hurts the rime at 1069-70 (read *crailtre: mailtre*). I noted three typos in the text: *vous* for *vous* (258), *vos* omitted before *vainqueurs* (989), *mois* for *moi* (1210).

Allusions, syntax, and matters of interpretation are treated with a fair degree of thoroughness in the Notes. The Vocabulary gives meanings to fit the text. Some of the words could have been given more adequate treatment, e.g. *flatter*, *foi*, *généreux*, *perdre*, *soin*. In 641 *fondaient* is from *fonder*, not *fonder*.

*Andromaque* needs no advocate. The chief virtue of this new edition is its generous Introduction.

HENRY L. ROBINSON

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STARR, W. H., Pellegrino, A. G., Casavant, H. A., *Functional French*. New York: American Book Company, 1951, xviii+292 pp., \$3.00.

This is an attractively bound grammar and conversation book designed for first year students of French. The authors indicate in the Preface that the purpose of the book is to incorporate the ASTP method with that of the old grammar method in order to facilitate the student's oral-aural use of the language. The book is divided into thirty units, each of which is divided into six parts: Speech and Vocabulary, Model Sentences, Grammar, Exercises, and Reading and Speaking. There are also appendices containing a French Pronunciation Guide, Regular Verb Chart, an Irregular Verb Chart, and a Vocabulary (French-English, English-French).

To furnish a text which provides material for the development of oral skill and initiation into the French language as an instrument of communication there are topics of conversation on everyday occurrences such as A Meeting, The Classroom, The Weather, In a Store, On the Square, At the Movies, etc. Even though the grammar rules are sometimes stated too simply, the reviewer tried to keep in mind that this is a practical text which stresses the language

of daily use and that many first-year texts are too encumbered with complicated rules.

One of the most outstanding features of this text is the numerous exercises for translation which are included in each part of the unit.

There are a few general criticisms. Concentrating upon the oral-aural method, the authors, in their presentation have provided no reading other than that included in the common every-day topics of conversation mentioned above. From this point of view their text is insufficient. They realized this, however, for they suggest that standard elementary readers may be used to advantage after ten or more units of their book have been covered.

In the vocabulary of each lesson there is no indication whether an infinitive is regular or irregular. It would seem wise to have indicated the irregular ones by an asterisk or some such identifying mark.

In a future or revised edition a few explanations should be enlarged, new ones inserted, and several changes made:

P. 4: "I" is used with any singular noun beginning with a vowel sound." Would it not be preferable to explain the French "h" here? In explaining the noun, there is no rule stated that the definite article must ordinarily be expressed with the noun in French.

P. 9: "The pronoun *je* becomes *j'* before words beginning with a vowel" . . . should it not be added: "or a mute *h*"?

P. 15: "The forms of the indefinite article are: *un, une*." What is the plural of the indefinite article?

P. 48: "On the construction of the affirmative imperative plus personal pronoun objects, the word order is: verb, direct object, indirect object." There could have been some mention here of the order of "y" and "en" in such a construction.

P. 62: "Familiarity with the past definite and past anterior is necessary for reading purposes but these tenses are not to be used in conversation." There could be objection raised on this point.

P. 77: In a list of intransitive verbs using "être" as an auxiliary in compound tenses there is an explanation that "monter" and "descendre" used as transitive verbs are conjugated with "avoir." Is this not also true for "rentrer" and "sortir"?

P. 92: In explaining the expression of the partitive article after certain constructions, the authors say: "after *besoin de*." This explanation is quite ambiguous. Would it not be better to say: "after expressions containing *de*, such as verbs and adjectives"?

P. 122: "The future tense in French is generally used as in English. However, the future is always used after "quand" meaning "when" if future time is implied." It would seem that this is the time also to say that the same holds true for "lorsque," "dès que," and "aussitôt que."

P. 166: In citing the uses of the disjunctive pronouns the authors failed to include the important use of this pronoun after "que" in comparisons. The explanation of the use of the disjunctive as a way to indicate emphasis is ambiguous.

P. 174: "What is . . . ? When a definition or explanation is required is expressed by *qu'est-ce que c'est que* . . . ?" "Qu'est-ce que" serves the same purpose.

P. 213: In explaining "to," "in," "at" and "from" with

countries and cities, it would be well to give the very simple rule of determining the gender of countries.

It will be an interesting experiment to use this text. Should the student apply himself in learning the material in the book, he would, without a doubt, emerge from his year of study with a very respectable speaking knowledge of French.

GEORGE DANIEL, JR.

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AVELINE, CLAUDE, *L'Exécution de Marinèche*. Edited by F. J. Gemmell and R. J. Quinault. D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, n. d., pp. 108. Price, \$1.28.

A three-page Introduction presents a brief sketch of the author and *L'Exécution de Marinèche*, an episode taken from Aveline's first novel, *Le Point du Jour*.

*L'Exécution de Marinèche* is the story of a group of highly imaginative *lycéens* at Versailles, who, under the spell of an inspired teacher of history, organize political clubs (Cordeliers, Jacobins, Feuillants). When "Danton," the leader of the Cordeliers, finds some underground passages in the park, he conceives a plan to imprison the leader of the "royalist" Feuillants. His lieutenant, the narrator, has misgivings and attempts a rescue that backfires. Meanwhile Danton relents. Both the intended victim and the would-be rescuer are rescued after a very short ordeal. The professor, having participated in the rescue, chides his boys and promises to keep the affair to himself if the boys mend their ways—a very decent chap, this professor!

Although the yarn is expertly spun, it is more likely to appeal to high school pupils than to college students. Moreover, the very brevity of the text (forty-six pages) is more adapted to the slow pace of younger readers. Even the Notes seem in their almost excessive thoroughness to be slanted toward the high school level. Three corrections should be made: Virgil's dates are 70–19 B. C.; Plato was not a disciple of Aristotle; the suffix *-ot* is not the same in origin as *-et*. The Vocabulary is complete and well executed.

The most amazing feature of the book is the deadly accuracy of the text, absolutely free of typos—evidently it can be done!

HENRY L. ROBINSON

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ANTON CHEKHOV. *Selected Short Stories*. Edited by G. A. Birkett and Gleb Struve. Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 1951. 235 pp. Price, \$3.00.

This book consists of twelve short stories, printed with indications of accent, a commentary, a list of selected idioms and difficult constructions, and a vocabulary. It is edited by two scholars about whose authority in respect to these matters there can be little question. It is handsomely and, on the whole, carefully printed and sturdily bound. Such a publication is good news indeed when one considers the generally low level of editing and printing that characterizes most works of this type.

To criticize such a book, one must consider four points:

first, the taste shown in the selection of stories; second, the care exercised in accenting and proofreading; third, the adequacy of the annotations; fourth, the completeness and relevance of the vocabulary.

It is, perhaps, on the first count that one can find most fault with the book. It contains some of Chekhov's best stories (for instance, "Dom s mezoninom," "Slučaj iz praktiki," and "Anna na šee"), stories that one could read cheerfully year after year. Unfortunately, it also contains several stories such as "Tolstyj i Tonkij" and "Neudatša," stories which not only represent inferior Chekhov, but which also have the fault of having appeared in other school anthologies.

The text is, in general, correctly accented and proofread. One notes a few errors here and there: for instance, *luna* on page 88, *otpirat'* on 201, . . . *siloj* . . . *kotoruju počemu-to bojalis* (an error, which, in all probability, appears also in the edition on which this text is based) on 91. However, slips of this sort are self-evident and will mislead no one.

The notes are good indeed. They rarely leave the student in doubt about the meaning of a difficult passage. They are especially good when it is a matter of explaining social and historical references. On the other hand, they are not excessively full. They rarely paraphrase what is obvious to begin with. The list of idioms is attractive and should prove stimulating to students.

The vocabulary deserves special praise. It appears to be complete if one can rely on a spot check. Moreover, the meanings given are sufficient to explain the passages in which they occur. When lengthier explanations are needed, these are given in the notes, and this fact is indicated by a cross-reference from the vocabulary. But what is most commendable in the vocabulary is the large amount of accurate morphological data it gives. For instance, it labels the aspect of each verb stem and supplies the form of the other aspect whenever the latter exists. It indicates irregularities in substantive declension. It is a pity it does not give more help in determining the forms of the present tense of the verbs.

All the faults that have been mentioned are minor in comparison with the very substantial virtues of the book.

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RATCLIFF, DILLWYN F. *Intermediate Spanish Grammar*. Henry Holt and Co., New York, 1952, pp. x+288+liii. \$2.60.

As the Preface of this new intermediate Spanish grammar tells us: "This book takes nothing for granted, but is more than a review grammar because it aims to extend as well as systematize the student's knowledge of Spanish" (p. iii). Most grammars are satisfied if the student understands *what* the grammar principle being treated is; this grammar tries to make the student understand *why*. For example, there is considerable discussion concerning the

"perfect tenses" (pp. 56-57). A very useful comparison of English and Spanish uses is made: "The past participles of the English verbs *to buy*, *to sell* and *to receive* are *bought*, *sold* and *received*, respectively. In English and Spanish the past participle may be used as a verb or as an adjective. Thus we may refer to 'the books *bought* her,' to 'a house *sold* last year' or to 'letters *received* yesterday.'" It is obvious that many teachers of Spanish will object to this leisurely discussion of grammar. Yet surely it belongs in a review grammar, if anywhere, for here the student should get the rounded and "extended" picture of Spanish grammar impossible in the hurried first year course.

Adjective position is another subject treated in detail by Professor Ratcliff (pp. 151-152). It is doubtful whether most students today would understand the author's reference to "the Homeric epithets . . . in such oft-repeated phrases as 'the wine-dark sea' and 'the wily Ulysses'" (p. 151). But they would understand his statement that "The position of the descriptive adjective is . . . influenced by a number of factors, such as euphony, sentence balance, and the mere length of the adjectival expression" (p. 151).

However, Professor Ratcliff's book is to be recommended to the profession chiefly because of the abundance of drill material and the adroitness of grouping drill sentences immediately after the exposition of a grammatical principle. Thus there are often several groups of drill sentences in a chapter before reaching the usual more inclusive group of drill sentences at the end of the chapter. The author has worked out a system of eye-catching black faced dots and squares, the squares being used to indicate grammar principles and the dots to indicate what the student is to do about them. These devices should prove very practical in the actual classroom use of the book.

There are five unusual selections from Hispanic authors, contrived to furnish conversation and composition by means of various exercises. The authors are well enough known, but the extracts are off the beaten path for Spanish grammars (*Un Baile en Caracas* by Narcisca Bruzual; *Per el Río Suárez en Colombia* by J. A. Osorio Lizarazo, etc.). The illustrations accompanying these selections are superb.

It is noted that among the Spanish-English grammars apparently inspiring this present work are those of Ralph E. Bassett and M. M. Ramsey. This is interesting, for the old Ramsey, while impossible in the contemporary classroom, has never been surpassed for clarity and thoroughness of grammatical exposition. Perhaps Ratcliff's work is only faintly reminiscent of Ramsey; in any case it is a virtue. And, of course, the abundant drills of many kinds provided by Ratcliff are entirely lacking in Ramsey.

In short, this new grammar can be heartily recommended to those teachers who have better than average second year classes. For those who want to skim over second year grammar, this book would be a waste of time and energy. It is for good students and good teachers.

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